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Arab-Israeli Talks

Al-Husayni: Gaza Border Crossings 'Resolved'

JN2311181293 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Before leaving Amman airport for Austria at the invitation of Austrian-Arab Relations Society, Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Advisory Council to the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, said: The problem of border crossings in Gaza has been resolved. Differences continue with Israel over the timetable on the release of Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails.

He noted that the Palestinian leadership has taken a rational and clear position on the conflicts inside the occupied Palestinian territories. He said Israel must take a similar position and annul orders for the Israeli Army to open fire on Palestinians and consider the use of weapons a violation for which the Israeli occupation authorities should punish the soldiers or settlers who use them. He also denounced the provocative Israeli actions.

Palestinians, Israelis Issue Statement on Cairo Talks

NC2311182893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1745 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Cairo, 23 Nov (MENA)—The Palestinian-Israeli Gaza-Jericho meetings will be held in Cairo and al-'Arish consecutively with the aim of reaching an agreement on handing over civilian authority to the Palestinians in Gaza and Jericho and on Israeli withdrawal from these areas.

A statement issued this evening by the Palestinian and Israeli sides after their meeting in Cairo within the framework of the Gaza-Jericho Committee affirmed that they discussed numerous topics pertaining to the Gaza-Jericho Agreement. The two sides agreed on the need to continue their talks to overcome the differences in opinion and bridge the gaps.

The statement, which was distributed by the Palestinian Information Office in Cairo, clarified that the talks between the two sides will continue tomorrow, Wednesday, on security in Gaza and Jericho and on how to transfer civilian authority to the Palestinian side.

The Gaza-Jericho Committee resumed its meetings today. The Palestinian side was headed by Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, and the Israeli side was chaired by General Amnon Shahaq, assistant chief of staff of the Israeli Defense Forces.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Plans for Return to Territories Detailed

NC2311133993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1050 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Tunis, 23 Nov (MENA)—Informed Palestinian sources have disclosed that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has issued orders to all PLO security and army personnel to be ready to leave for the occupied Arab territories—to Gaza, through Egyptian territory, and to Jericho, through Jordan, within eight days at the most.

The sources added that 'Arafat told the Palestinian cadres about a plan for most of the PLO offices and factions in Tunis to leave, with the exception of the Political Department, which is headed by Faruq Qaddumi, alias Abu-al-Lutf; and the returnees department, which was headed by 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, whose membership in the PLO Executive Committee has been frozen because he objected to the Gaza-Jericho accord.

The same sources said that some 500 Palestinian security and army personnel will be assembled in a camp in Tunis before leaving for Egypt or Jordan. The sources added that the assembled personnel will be divided into three groups. The first will comprise army personnel and will leave first, followed by the staff command and its affiliate bodies. President 'Arafat, his aides, and faction members will be in the last group. Their families will join them next July, once the school year ends and suitable conditions are provided in the Palestinian territories to absorb them all.

The sources said other Palestinian personnel in Algeria, Libya, Sudan, Yemen, Iraq, and Egypt have also started departure preparations. The sources added that Brigadier General Khalid Sultan has left for Libya and Brigadier General al-Haj Isma'il has left for Iraq for this purpose. President 'Arafat also issued decisions appointing Major General Nasr Yusuf as commander of the police forces in the Gaza Strip, which has been divided into five areas. Sa'it al-'Ajiz will be in charge of security in the north, Ziyad al-Atrash in Khan Yunus, and Khalid Sultan, 'Abd-al-Wahid al-Ahad, and Abu-Humayd in the other areas. Major General Khalid (?al-Salah) has been appointed head of security in Jericho, and Brigadier Generals al-Haj Isma'il and Muhammad Qadisah have been appointed as his assistants.

According to the Palestinian sources, 'Arafat has decided to merge the united security and central security organs into one intelligence agency, which will be run by three people: Amin al-Hindi, who served as primary aide to late Salah Khalaf, alias Abu-Iyad; Tariq Abu-Rajab; and Fakhri Shaffurah. It has also been decided that Force 17 will be entrusted with presidential security.

It has been learned that a building in the city of Jericho has been appointed selected for other nonsecurity agencies. It has also been learned that three Fatah Central Committee members and 10 PLO Executive Committee

members will be among the Palestinian officials who will accompany 'Arafat's return procession. The three are Major General Nasr Yusuf; Intisar al-Wazir, alias Umm-Jihad; and 'Abdallah al-Ifranji, the Palestinian ambassador in Bonn.

The Palestinian sources added that 'Arafat has given strict instructions to the Palestinian delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli subcommittee negotiations, which resume in Cairo today, to show no tolerance regarding the area of Jericho and to reach no agreement on the Gaza Strip until an agreement is reached on Jericho. 'Arafat believes that the Israeli Government, which has expressed its willingness to relinquish and withdraw from Gaza more than once, might stall for time in the negotiations on Jericho.

Further on Reinstatement of 'Force 17'

JN2311184793 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 23 Nov 93 pp 1, 17

[By Riyad Mansur]

[Text] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has suddenly decided to reinstate a presidential security force known as Force 17, led by Brigadier General Muhammad al-Natur, alias Abu-al-Tayyib. 'Arafat dissolved the force in the wake of the Gulf war and froze Abu-al-Tayyib's membership in response to a request by the U.S. Administration.

The shift in attitude toward Force 17 came after a reconciliation between 'Arafat and Abu-al-Tayyib in Cairo two months ago. Abu-al-Tayyib resides in Amman.

Sources close to the Palestinian president confirmed 'Arafat met Abu-al-Tayyib in his Tunis office over two days. Information that leaked indicates the two put the finishing touches on a security plan for the self-rule region and the deployment of forces in Gaza and Jericho.

On 21 November, President 'Arafat asked Abu-al-Tayyib to resume his former duties at the presidential security agency. Abu-al-Tayyib's first mission after his reappointment was in Tripoli. He left for Tripoli yesterday with a message from the Palestinian president to Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

Abu-al-Tayyib left for Libya, accompanied by Nasr Yusuf, a Fatah Central Committee member. 'Arafat also asked Abu-al-Tayyib to establish camps for the presidential guard forces, to be made up of 1,000 men, most of whom should be from Force 17. Force 17 protected the Palestinian president in Beirut when the Palestinian revolution was based in Lebanon prior to 1982. The training camps of these forces should also be in Jordan.

Sources close to the Palestinian president told SAWT AL-SHA'B the letter carried by Brig. Gen. Abu-al-Tayyib from 'Arafat to al-Qadhdhafi concerns the program for the departure of Palestinian forces on Libyan territory. The forces are deployed in Tripoli, al-Sarah, and al-Kafrah, and include the Air Force, the Navy, the infantry, and presidential guard agencies. These forces will leave for Gaza and Jericho within the next two weeks.

'Bodyguard Training' Course Ends in Cairo

TA2311173793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Twenty-two youths from the Gaza Strip who graduated from a bodyguard training course in Cairo entered the Gaza Strip via the Rafah border terminal a short time ago and returned to their homes. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports they were accompanied by three senior Palestine Liberation Army officers. The group was greeted by Ibrahim Muhanna, the temporary Gaza police chief, who was previously a chief inspector in the Gaza Region Police.

Police Trainees Receive Human Rights Lecture

NC2311134493 Paris AFP in English 0236 GMT 23 Nov 93

[By Nabil Rached]

[Text] Al-Zarka', Jordan, Nov 23 (AFP)—As a first batch of 22 members of the fledgling Palestinian police force graduated Monday [22 November] in Cairo, their colleagues here were being lectured on human rights by a British expert.

Dressed in white uniforms and wearing earphones carrying a simultaneous translation, the class of 50 officers of the future force listened attentively to Professor Ralph Crawshaw, from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

He was explaining how to arrest a suspect without offending his dignity. Behind him, the overhead projector showed a slide pointing out that a policeman had to have reasonable grounds for arresting someone.

This ICRC training course is drilling its second group of Palestinian policemen, due to take over from the Israeli soldiers who start withdrawing on December 13 from the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho, in terms of the historic September 13 accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on limited Palestinian autonomy.

After the lecture, Crawshaw held a question and answer session. First question: "Can a policeman detain anyone at any time for an identity check?"

Crawshaw replied that although that would be within a policeman's powers, he should exercise that power sparingly, restricting it to the area around the scene of a crime recently committed.

One of the officers, who have all been recruited from the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), stressed the importance of the course, held in the PLA barracks in this town some 30 kilometres (18 miles) northeast of Amman.

"From now on we have to behave like policemen and not like soldiers," Colonel Jamal Qudsiyyah said.

Marco Sassoli, the ICRC's director in Amman, said the courses would help avert possible excesses.

"The future Palestinian police must not act against civilians like soldiers at the front."

Another course is planned next week in Cairo, and the ICRC will keep up contacts with the policemen after they go on duty, Sassoli said.

The last batch of the PLA's "Badr" contingent in Jordan is finishing its military training. PLA units stationed in various Arab countries are being brought back to Jordan and Egypt to be retrained as policemen.

"Badr" contingent commander General Muhammad Qudsiyyah told AFP: "Come December 12 there will be 3,000 policemen ready to go into Jericho as soon as they get the political green light."

The "al-Aqsa" contingent, stationed in Iraq, is expected soon in Jordan to undergo police training. According to a Palestinian source here, they number 1,000 men.

The police will also include the Egyptian-based "'Ayn Jalut" contingent, which boasts 5,000 men, a Palestinian military source here said.

The PLA has also recruited 750 men aged 25 and under, all of them living in Jordan with a clean police record, for training as police, the source said.

The PLO reckons it will need 30,000 men to police the territory vacated by the Israeli army.

Aide Reveals Economic Draft Agreement With Jordan

PM2311153893 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 23 Nov 93 p 4

[Report on interview with Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, member of the PLO Executive Committee and head of the Economic Department, by Fathi al-Barqawi in Tunis; date not given]

[Excerpts] A high-ranking Palestinian official has revealed that a draft agreement between Jordan and the PLO was discussed in the PLO Executive Committee's meetings a week ago, but there was not sufficient time to take a suitable decision in this connection.

Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, member of the PLO Executive Committee and head of the Economic Department, added in an exclusive interview with AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI that "with regard to building our national economy, we are looking both east and west." He said that the outlines of a draft agreement have been drawn up, proceeding from belief in the distinctive relationship between the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples and aspiration to a confederation to be achieved voluntarily in the future. He pointed out that any endeavor toward a confederal link should be coupled with an endeavor toward economic integration. He stressed that the two peoples' interests and future are the same, in order to confront what he termed other forces—and this suggests that they should have one economy.

Asked about the content of this draft agreement, al-Nashashibi said that it deals with two points: one temporary, concerning the transitional phase and banks, and the second concerning trade, movement of individuals, customs standardization, agricultural and industrial development, energy, and joint enterprises. [passage omitted]

On ways of freeing the Palestinian economy from the Israeli economy, as both have been linked as a result of many years of occupation, al-Nashashibi says: With regard to building a national economy, we have first to proceed from sovereignty over natural resources without foreign intervention. He added that the occupation conditions, which caused the Palestinian economy to be linked and subservient to an imperialist, colonialist economy in the center, should be gradually eliminated on the basis of international charters, which have given every state the right to build its own national economy in accordance with its people's needs and in isolation from foreign intervention.

On that basis, we are going to work very cautiously, but with determination, in order to build an economy that serves the Palestinian masses and is free from subservience and in order to look forward to a unified Arab future. The Palestinian economy has to center on the economies of neighboring states, especially Jordan and Egypt and the other Arab states, in a serious attempt to build an economic bloc to confront giant economic blocs.

Concluding his interview, al-Nashashibi says: "With regard to building our economy we are looking both east and west. This is our way to free ourselves from links which have been imposed on us forcibly and which we cannot accept should be imposed voluntarily."

New Mainstream Fatah Paper To Be Published

TA2311184693 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Announcer-read report]

[Text] Reliable Palestinian sources have stated to our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has ordered the publication of a new daily paper effective 10 December. The paper will be called FAJR AL-SHA'B [The People's Dawn] and will represent the views of the mainstream Fatah in the PLO. The West Bank location where this paper is to be published has not been announced yet.

DFLP's Hawatimah: 'Perpetuate the Conflict'

JN2311205293 Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 15 Nov 93 p 10

[Interview with Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, DFLP, by Ahmad Suwwan; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Suwwan] How do you evaluate the current Arab situation and its political map?

[Hawatimah] The current Arab state of affairs is, as the saying goes, neither pleasing to a friend nor painful to an enemy. Arab solidarity has collapsed under the pressure of the second Gulf war. The disintegration of the Soviet Union has served U.S. policy worldwide as well as Israel's expansionist policy. This has also promoted a U.S.-controlled Middle East in which Israel has the upper hand in economics and technology. This Middle East will witness normalization in all forms without settling the substantive issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict: withdrawal from all of the 1967-occupied Arab territories and ensuring the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the refugees' right of return in accordance with UN Resolution 194. [passage omitted]

We witness today a contradiction between what is taking place at the hands of many regimes, along with 'Arafat's wing, in response to the Israeli-U.S. conditions, and the situation of the people who are watching what is happening and looking for ways to maintain their steadfastness in the face of a hostile offensive that followed the second Gulf war.

[Suwwan] Understanding the nature of this contradiction makes it imperative on the forces that express the popular wish to oppose defeatist solutions to close ranks. What is your comment?

[Hawatimah] We view this contradiction in terms of what is happening on the ground. You have the intifadah in the occupied territories, which is upholding the slogans: No to the occupation, no to settlement activity, and yes for finding the 'Arafat-Rabin agreement. The alternative offered by the intifadah is the insistence on a comprehensive, balanced peace based on the Palestinian people's right to freedom, self-determination, repatriation, and an independent state. This also depends on links among the intifadah, all our people, and the steadfast Arab forces around us. [passage omitted]

What is required is to perpetuate the conflict to besiege and defeat the 'Arafat-Rabin agreement on the ground and to remain steadfast to prevent separate agreements. When this happens, Israel and Washington will reconsider their offensive, expansionist strategy and reembrace a comprehensive settlement in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy, summed up in the phrase: full withdrawal for full peace. [passage omitted]

Fatah-The Uprising Communique on Refinery Attacks

JN2311194193 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Fatah-the Uprising has issued a second military communique on an operation, codenamed Nar al-Fath [Fatah Fire], it has carried out. It says: Several groups of our movement's cells inside the occupied homeland planted sophisticated and remote-controlled high explosives in huge 3-meter deep gas reservoirs, placed inside huge reinforced concrete tunnels covered with a layer of steel.

The communique says: The operation was carried out in two stages on Wednesday, 10 November and Friday, 12 November. As a result, huge fires broke out, many Zionists were either killed or wounded, and strong shocks were caused by successive explosions and fires.

The communique adds: We pledge to our people and our nation to continue to deal strong qualitative blows to all the enemy's institutions and groupings.

Commenting on the Zionist enemy's admission of the heroic operation, the communique says: At 2305 on Saturday night 12 November, Hebrew television announced that huge fires broke out and devoured the woods around the refinery. The television made several successive announcements that an extensive gas leak took place in the Haifa area and on the Haifa-Akko highway. Then the enemy radio announced in Hebrew that factories were closed in the industrial zone around the refinery.

Cairo radio also said on Saturday morning, 10 November that heavy clouds of gas had covered the sky of the Mediterranean sea as a result of a gas leak from the Haifa refinery. Fires continued from Friday morning, 12 November to Monday, 15 November.

The communique adds: We believe that the utmost secrecy in which the Zionist entity wrapped up the Nar al-Fath operation is natural, is in line with its policy toward such incidents, and is aimed at preserving its settlers' morale and concealing its severe losses.

Palestinian Factions Told To Unite or Lose Aid

NC2411115293 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 22 Nov 93 p 10

[Text] Iran's Revolution Guard officials in Iran (Reza'i) and in Lebanon ('Askari) have met with the general secretaries of the 10 Palestinian factions based in Damascus. The meeting was part of Iran's mediation among the 10 factions to urge them to reach an agreement to unify their efforts to confront the Gaza-Jericho agreement. They threatened that Iran's aid to these factions will be suspended if they maintain their current positions and relations.

'Arafat Receives Message From Indonesian President

LD2311202293 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and PLO Executive Committee chairman, today received a message from His Excellency President Suharto of the Indonesian Republic concerning his country's activities within the Nonaligned Movement related to the Palestinian issue.

The Indonesian president reaffirmed that his country and the Nonaligned Movement will continue to closely follow current developments following the signing of the declaration of principles agreement.

The Indonesian president refers to the meeting of the Palestine Committee of the Nonaligned Movement in New York, at which they stressed the need to secure the support of the international community and also UN responsibility for the Palestinian issue. The committee stressed the need for a decisive and effective UN role in the peace process and in ensuring the availability of all forms of aid to the Palestinians so that they succeed in the their future steps.

He also refers to the New York meeting of Nonaligned foreign ministers, who emphasized their support for the comprehensive and just solution to the Palestinian issue based on the resolutions of international legitimacy and the UN Security Council. They renewed their commitment to lend support to the Palestinian people until they realize their inalienable rights, including their right to establish their own independent state on their national soil.

Motives of U.S. Mediation in Yemen Questioned

PM1911144593 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 16 Nov 93 p 11

[Editorial: "The Suspect American Mediation in Yemen"]

[Text] The Arab mediation efforts to resolve the internal Yemeni dispute between President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and his deputy 'Ali Salim al-Bid recall the golden period of Arab mediation preceding the second Gulf war. They are also seen as a healthy sign and indication of a return, albeit meek, to the days of joint Arab action within the framework of the Arab League and the Arab summit conferences held in that context.

After the mediation of Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id came the efforts of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, who visited Sanaa and Aden, and now we hear about Jordanian mediation by al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Jordanian Royal Court and King Husayn's envoy.

Whereas Arab mediation efforts in connection with Arab disputes are a familiar thing and a known tribal tradition, what is unusual is that we read about American mediation between the Yemeni president and his vice president carried out by Margaret Dean, head of the Arabian Peninsula desk at the U.S. State Department.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first time the United States has taken such a step and tried to intervene in the settlement of a purely internal dispute governed by psychological, tribal, and ideological factors.

We can understand the United States intervening to facilitate border talks between Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or to mediate between the two states to resolve oil disputes reaching the point of threats to Western oil companies, but what we cannot understand or comprehend is that the situation in Yemen had deteriorated to a point requiring the mediation of an American lady in connection with a highly sensitive and complex issue such as the dispute between the Yemeni president and his deputy.

It is true that the United States places Yemen's stability at the top of its list of interests and priorities in the region. It is even truer to say that the promising prospect of Yemeni oil is strategically very important to the United States, but it is difficult to imagine that the direct American intervention in the said dispute is for the purpose of resolving and not intensifying it, as was the case in other Arab disputes.

The U.S. foreign policymakers take into account the fact that the Yemeni oil is the only such source in the region that is safe and not threatened because, unlike the Gulf oil, it is far from straits and gates which could be closed or controlled to the detriment of U.S. interests.

In other words, Yemen's oil goes directly to the open seas and oceans without going through the Suez Canal, the Strait of Hormuz or Gibraltar like Saudi, Kuwaiti, Iraqi, Iranian, Libyan, or Algerian oil. That is why the United States cares about it very much and wants it to be safe from any internal disputes which might hamper the development of its production and export. It succeeded to a large extent in that when it prevented external threats to Yemen from its neighbors from becoming an obstacle on that road and it also helped in raising average daily production to 350,000 barrels just a month ago.

Another factor is Yemen's promising prospects as a center for U.S. and European future projects. It is a known fact that the Gulf states have completed their infrastructures with regard to airports, roads, housing, and factories, and there is no more room for Western companies to work and invest there, unlike Yemen, which needs development and construction projects and is starting almost from scratch.

So the United States is not intervening out of concern for Yemeni democracy. Its primary concern is for its own strategic interests in the Arabian Peninsula, especially economic interests, and it wants to build up a level of manpower parallel to that of Saudi Arabia to ensure the required balance in the region.

What worries us is the magnitude of U.S. interference in Arab affairs these days, reaching even the most private Arab affairs. As it interferes in Yemeni disputes and calls and works for Arab solidarity and reconciliation, all that is left for the Arabs to do is hand all their affairs over to the White House and turn the entire Arab region into an official U.S. governorate or an electoral constituency at least.

If the present situation continues we would not be surprised if U.S. President Bill Clinton sent an envoy to reconcile an Arab leader with his wife or an amir with his son or heir apparent, and so on.

If this is the beginning then the end is a foregone conclusion and does not require much thought or insight, and it would not be honorable for the Arabs, their history, or their heritage.

Arab States Concerned Over Sale of F-15's to Israel

PM2311140493 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 18 Nov 93 p 11

[Editorial: "Syrian Concern and Israeli Provocation"]

[Text] The deal involving warplanes which Israel intends to purchase from the United States has aroused the concern of many Arab states, especially fraternal Syria, which sees it as evidence of Israel's lack of serious commitment to working toward peace in the region.

These Syrian concerns are legitimate, since Israel does not need more aircraft to prove its strategic supremacy in the region. It is the greatest regional power and can—if allowed—inflict a quick defeat on any Arab state it wants.

The new U.S. F-15's Israel intends to purchase are the most advanced offensive aircraft, and all previous U.S. Administrations refused to sell them to states outside NATO because of their high combat capability in the air. They can also hit ground targets.

We do not know what prompted President Bill Clinton to break this veto and sell Israel 20 of these aircraft at once, unless it is a new "bribe" aimed at continuing to reassure Israel and prompt it to sign peace agreements on the Lebanese and Syrian tracks.

Syrian frustration, which increased after both Jordan and the PLO signed declaration of principles agreements with Israel, is known to everyone. After all the "flexibility" it had displayed, the Syrian Government felt it had been deceived by the United States and the Rabin government.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Syria realized there was no alternative to peace and harmony with U.S. policies in the Arab region, which is why it joined the Americans against Iraq during the Gulf war. And it was very eager to participate in the Madrid peace conference.

This correct Syrian reading of political realities in the region and the world as a whole still have not encountered any U.S. response in the form of pressure on the Israeli Government to force it to withdraw from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon—which, if continued, threaten to bring back tension and instability to the region as a whole and to torpedo the peace agreements achieved so far.

It is no coincidence for fedayeen operations to escalate in southern Lebanon. Nor is it a coincidence for the Arab resistance to fire their rockets on Israeli settlements on Galilee, wounding two Israeli soldiers for the first time in three months.

This escalation is a clear message to the United States and Israel. It also reflects a Syrian-Lebanese-Iranian concern over failure to achieve a comprehensive settlement and serious progress on the other two Arab tracks. But the fear is that Israel may exploit this escalation to launch a partial war against the Arab and Islamic resistance and the Syrian forces in southern Lebanon, thus torpedoing all the political and economic stability achieved in Lebanon and bringing back the state of chaos that existed before the al-Ta'if accord.

Resistance remains legitimate as long as Israel continues to occupy Arab land in Lebanon, the Golan, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. The best way to confront this resistance is not the reprisal operations carried out by Israel from time to time against southern Lebanese villages, but, rather, working seriously toward peace.

Israel's conduct on more than one front at present does not give the impression that Israel is searching for a lasting peace, but, rather, a temporary truce and real fragmentation of the Arab position, otherwise what is the meaning of the present deadlock on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and the obstacles placed daily in the way of the Taba negotiations concerning withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho?

The announcement of a new tour of the region by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher before the end of the year is a glimmer of hope which could help to delay any explosion of the current situation, even if it does not succeed in defusing it. But the fear is that Israel could preempt events—as usual—and spark off war and evacuation in order to divert the tour from its real aim and create a new reality, as it did before Christopher's previous round when it evacuated over 250,000 southerners to Beirut.

Arabs Urged To Include PLO in Peace Deliberations

TA2311184093 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 23 Nov 93 p 11

[Editorial: "The Importance of Comprehensive Arab Coordination"]

[Text] The Arab states interested in a peaceful settlement have been exerting great efforts in the last days, and up to this moment, to activate the talks with the Israelis to reach a comprehensive formula that will make peace possible and acceptable to all the parties. Egypt has been and remains the focal point in reconciling the various viewpoints. Through Egypt's efforts numerous differences, especially between the Palestinians and Israelis, have been bridged.

The Syrian track has currently become the center of attention by various Arab and international parties that are interested in invigorating the peace process, particularly after it seemed as though this track had been somewhat deadlocked in the wake of the interim agreement between the PLO and Israel. Israeli officials have stressed that they are preoccupied with implementing this agreement and that there will be movement on the Syrian track at the appropriate time after understanding is reached between the Syrian and Israeli sides over basic concepts. The most important of these are: The nature of the peace that will be reached between the two sides, mutual security with all the withdrawal and the demilitarized zones that this entails, and other such issues.

King Hussayn's visit to Syria two days ago came within the framework of Arab consultations and coordinating efforts over the future of the peace process. The two sides' emphasis on achieving a comprehensive and just peace is considered an extension of the positions of the other Arab parties, including the Palestinian of course. This position has not and will never deviate from the circle of Arab understanding, even though the recent interim agreement might have seemed to some to have deviated from this circle. For, the final settlement of the Palestinian problem is to be discussed two years after the implementation of that agreement, whereas negotiations on the other three tracks have been and are being conducted over a final settlement regarding pending issues between Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan on one hand, and Israel on the other.

Perhaps the most elementary request under such circumstances is to call for restoring coordination and consultation among all the Arab parties concerned without exception. That means including the Palestinian side in the current deliberations and consultations, because the realization of this demand will boost the comprehensive Arab position on one hand, and enhance the position of each Arab party on the other. All this will result in removing the sensitivities and doubts, which might increase if the current situation continues. Egypt, and to some extent Jordan, are at present engaged in clearing the climate among the Arab parties interested in peace. They are doing so under very difficult circumstances from all aspects and in all spheres.

OPEC Affairs

Chairman 'Pessimistic' About Raising Oil Prices

AU2810073793 Paris AFP in English 0829 GMT 28 Nov 93

[By Isabelle Hourade]

[Text] Vienna, Nov 24 (AFP)—Departing OPEC chairman Jean Ping of Gabon was pessimistic Tuesday [23 November] as he opened a new round of talks aimed at securing higher prices for oil in a market depressed by over-production and slack demand.

It was clear Ping expected nothing from his efforts to persuade non-OPEC countries to cut back their own production which has grown steadily in recent years.

"So far as action goes, it seems that everyone is waiting for the other to act first," he told representatives of the 12-member Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

If some countries "have chosen this period of the year to increase their output, even before the arrival of winter in the northern hemisphere, they must realise that they are doing so at the expense of our share of the market and of our revenue," Ping said in an allusion to a recent surge in production at North Sea oil fields.

Ping expressed overall satisfaction at the way OPEC countries had fulfilled their commitments.

Quantities delivered to the market, as listed by the various members, attained 24.85 million barrels a day (bpd) instead of a ceiling of 24.5 bpd set for the six months up to March 31, he said.

He said the difference—[illegible] bpd—was due to the difference between the quota allocated to Iraq ([illegible] bpd) and the production figure of [illegible] bpd provided by Baghdad.

"We did all in our power to create a climate of cooperation and compromise.... I think we can say we did our job," he said.

The basket price based on seven crudes which serves as OPEC's benchmark nonetheless declined to 16.70 dollars a barrel, "well below the reference price of 21 dollars a barrel and dangerously below what most of us consider to be the minimum economic revenue," Ping said.

He said demand for oil had declined "mainly because of the continuing recession in Europe and Japan" but this was not the only reason for the fall in prices.

Ping expressed regret that despite professing to support OPEC's efforts to stabilise the market, countries outside OPEC had given no sign of being willing to curb their own output.

He said OPEC "must be prepared to take all necessary measures." He added: "We must be able to do something in the short term to strengthen the market."

Shortly before the conference opened, Ping said members would have to "take a decision" either on cutting back production "or another solution."

Algerian Oil Minister Ahmed Benbouzaa said he was "not satisfied with present prices" and would back "any solution likely to improve prices."

For Iran, Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i said the level of crude oil prices was "unacceptable" for his country.

Saudi Minister Hisham Muhyi-al-Din Nazir gave no hint of what he would do and refused to answer journalists who asked him whether Saudi Arabia would agree to cutbacks.

The opening session was concerned with administrative matters but OPEC General-Secretary Dr. Subroto urged ministers to get down to "substantial" issues at Wednesday's session due to begin at 11:00 a.m. [1000 GMT].

Qatari Oil Minister 'Abdallah Bin-Hamad al-'Atiyah was named to replace Ping as chairman for the next six months.

Qatari, Libyan Ministers Named Chairman, Vice President

AU2311190493 Paris AFP in English 1833 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Vienna, Nov 23 (AFP)—Qatari Oil Minister 'Abdallah Bin-Hamad al-'Atiyah was named president on Tuesday [23 November] of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) until the next ordinary conference, a source close to the organization said.

The Qatar minister, who was OPEC vice-president, succeeds Jean Ping, the Gabonese minister.

Libyan Oil Minister 'Abdallah Salim al-Badri was named vice-president, the source said.

Algeria

Higher State Council, National Dialogue Commission Meet

LD2311203893 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] The Higher State Council [HSC] held a working session with the National Dialogue Commission [NDC] to study the necessary means to make the dialogue succeed and to restore the unanimity during the transitional period.

Bearing in mind that the transitional period should be an intermediate preparatory period leading to an era characterized by the stability of the political institutions within the context of a democratic republican constitutional system that secures the principle of alternating authority through elections and respects the basic national values; and on the basis of the assessments and estimates submitted by the NDC and because of its awareness of its responsibilities and commitments to the whole national group and to all the constituent parts of the social and political structures and in accordance with its previous commitments expressed in particular in the speeches of 14 January and 8 May 1993, the HSC firmly intends to provide all the suitable conditions for consolidating the democratic system in which each person will actually practice in full all his basic rights, particularly the political ones.

Because of its commitment to exert every effort to achieve national reconciliation and to restore civil peace under the best conditions and at the least cost, the HSC reiterates its full intention to include in the political structure all the currents which have remained respectful of the law and which have not thus far participated in the dialogue, provided that this inclusion means that these currents will completely and strictly respect the Constitution and supremacy of law and hence respect the decisions of the judiciary.

In other words, this means that if there are political personalities qualified to express the preoccupations of these currents of Algerian society, then the national dialogue entrusted to the NDC should constitute the suitable framework for their participation as a first step toward practising their political rights on the basis of new rules. This participation concerns only those who are in a position that does not violate the law.

Because of its commitment to the gradual restoration of civil peace, the HSC, on the basis of the pursuits of the NDC, has studied the possibility of adopting the necessary measures to achieve reconciliation among the various constituent parts of the Algerian people and has studied other measures that could be adopted according to a gradual course compatible with the achieved progress toward the establishment of civil peace and respect of law and public order, particularly adjusting the curfew in a suitable way, lifting some of the house arrest orders, or easing the conditions of surveillance, and looking into the submitted appeals within the context of implementing Decree No. 93/54.

Because of all these, the HSC appeals to the civil and democratic senses of every individual and every political and social organization to work through unanimity toward securing the success of the national commission, which administers the transitional period. This period is a test for all Algerians who are committed to national unity, the interests of the people, and loyalty to the principles of the glorious November revolution and the national values.

Ben Bella Urges Dialogue

LD2311234393 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Excerpts] Within the framework of the series of interviews which the radio is holding with party leaders on the dialogue matters and the fateful issues in the political arena, we present to you today the statement of Ahmed Ben Bella, the leader of the Movement for Democracy in Algeria:

[Begin Ben Bella recording] I see that there is at present a dangerous escalation in the recent period. With all frankness, I would have liked the National Dialogue Commission to start its work in another atmosphere, that is, a nice atmosphere of calm and peace, in order to build up the essential elements for making this action successful.

I see a contradiction between the action of the national dialogue commission, in which I trust; I know and have confidence in brother Hacene and I know that his choice was good, and we are ready to cooperate with it within the conditions [sentence as heard]. Among these, we must go to a dialogue which brings everybody together, all the parties in conflict including the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], and then let us see, in one way or another, i.e. when we agree on the essential issue, we will see how the formalities and other things will be.

Regardless of the issue of rejection by some elements of the FIS, as we have heard, who have rejected dialogue, I say that we have one solution left, which is dialogue with all parties. Whoever wants to get out of this circle of dialogue will then assume his responsibility. I think that the stance which we adopt with regard to dialogue with all is fundamental and essential. I see that dialogue is necessary and that the solution lies in dialogue and not in anything else. If there are parties which reject this dialogue, we do not call for dialogue because we benefit somebody or a party, we should find out what benefits our country and do it. We do not hold dialogue with any condition, we do it on the basis of the existing constitution, the multiparty system, democracy and so on and so forth.

We are in need of dialogue. The security situation does not go along with the spirit for making this dialogue successful, i.e. the circumstances which we must obtain

so as to hold dialogue. We would have liked the commission to start work with an improvement of the atmosphere with some measures such as the release of some prisoners, the closing down of camps in the south, and perhaps the adoption of some measures with regard to some prisoners, so as to make it possible for them to participate in this dialogue and in general [[word indistinct].

How is it, brother, that there are some patriotic people. I do not make a distinction between them and the army, there are patriotic people in the army just as there are in parties and so on. The army has a great responsibility, and in my view there is no problem with the army. The army knows that the situation is dangerous, and I say that we must not ask the army to assume more than we should. [end recording]

Exiled FIS Leader Rejects Talks With Government

LD2311220093 Madrid TVE Internacional Television in Spanish 2000 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Video report from Berlin by correspondent Daniel Peral, including report on interview with exiled Algerian Islamic Salvation Front leader Rabah Kebir]

[Text] [Announcer] The Algerian socialists will participate in the political dialogue in their country if the regime fulfills a number of democratic conditions. In statements made in Madrid, Ait Ahmed, the Algerian socialist leader, has defended the role of the army as the guarantor of the process. The Algerian Higher State Council said today that it is prepared to include in this dialogue those fundamentalists who are not serving sentences. However, in exclusive statements to our correspondent in Berlin, the leader in exile of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] has rejected negotiation with the regime.

[Peral] Algeria is not in a civil war, says exiled FIS leader Rabah Kebir. What is happening is that the people are fighting a military dictatorship. We have 50,000 intellectuals in prison and no one talks about this. The FIS is not in favor of killing and if some intellectuals have died, he says, it is because they were in favor of the government, and the people are taking revenge on them—it is not the FIS's doing. Rabah Kebir does not rule out the possibility of there being uncontrolled elements within his movement, but he does not give them much importance. He repeats that the violent actions are those of the people. [video shows Kebir seated in western dress, speaking to Peral and leafing through book]

Rabah Kebir has applied for political asylum in Germany and lives somewhere in this country. He is convinced that the FIS will get into power and says that he will respect the results of new elections if they do not win.

Dressed completely in the western style, a surprising thing for an Islamic leader, he says that if the FIS gets into power relations with Spain will be better because there will then be a stable government in Algiers. He says that there will not be any problems with the supply of gas to our country. We are not, he concludes, so ingenuous—we sell the gas in exchange for money.

FFS Leader Calls For New Election Laws

LD2311215693 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Mr. Hocine Ait Ahmed, the leader of the Socialist Forces Front [FFS], organized a news conference in Madrid in which he talked about the situation in Algeria and reiterated his party's stance for solving the political crisis in Algeria. Over to you Tarik Temlali:

[Temlali] Mr. Hocine Ait Ahmed said that the army must set up a sovereign national conference, in which it would be a party and a guarantor, and abide by it. He said that the Algerian Republic needed a democratic constitution and a return to people's legitimacy was necessary, as far as the FFS was concerned. The return to general elections did not mean a return to the point of departure because the FFS has cause for complaint from the two previous election laws.

The FFS calls for the proportional representation voting system and new electoral lists, an action to be carried out by a national election committee. It also calls for strict supervision of the elections and the beneficial attendance of nongovernmental orgar·zations.

The FFS also called for a historic concession in which there will be no losers but one winner, Algeria. Mr. Hocine Ait Ahmed recalled that there was no problem without a solution: the Palestinians and the Israelis and the blacks and whites in South Africa have given an example of this.

The FFS considers it necessary to adopt measures for detente and appeasement to give hope. Mr. Hocine Ait Ahmed said that if that direction was followed, he was personally ready to commit himself to implementing that project.

Four Civilians Killed by 'Terrorist Group'

LD2311202493 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Four citizens, including war veteran Omar Zoubir aged 60, were killed by a terrorist group at 2100 [2000 GMT] last Sunday [21 November] near 5 May 1945 district in Bab Ezzouar [Algiers].

Egypt

Musa on Peace Process, Christopher Visit

TA2311174693 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 23 Nov 93 p 5

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa by Cairo correspondent Eldad Beck; place and date not given]

[Text] [Beck] Will the progress made in the Cairo talks enable adherence to the tight timetable?

[Musa] I hope so. Adherence to the timetable stipulated in the declaration of principles is very important and vital in order to prove to all, mainly to Israel and the Palestinians, that the agreements can be implemented.

[Beck] Has Egypt been officially asked to host Palestine Liberation Army troops before they are transferred to the Gaza Strip?

[Musa] It is not a question of moving troops to Egypt. There is a certain number of Palestinian security troops and, according to the agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, they will be transferred to Gaza and Jericho. These troops will have to get to Gaza and Jericho either by air, sea, or land, and they must be provided with the means to do that.

[Beck] Will Egypt allow the PLO to relocate its offices from Tunis to Cairo?

[Musa] We have not yet discussed it.

[Beck] How do you foresee future relations between Egypt and the Gaza Strip? Will the Gaza Strip be under Egyptian influence?

[Musa] Absolutely not. That is not how we see the matter. We will regard the Palestinians in a spirit of partnership because Egypt is a neighboring country. There is no question of influence or of being "a big brother." We hope we will be able to help rebuild an infrastructure in the Gaza Strip or to participate in the construction of an infrastructure in those areas, if we are asked to do so, and if and when we can do that. However, this will be done after prior coordination between the incumbent parties.

[Beck] There has been a great deal of criticism within the PLO, particularly by Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], about the secret negotiations with Israel.

[Musa] Abu-Mazin criticized the secrecy? How could Abu-Mazin, the man who oversaw the secret talks in Oslo, come out against secret talks on the implementation of the agreement he encouraged? The talks in Cairo are not secret; they are quiet, they are being held in a quiet atmosphere. There is no question of secrecy. Everybody knows that the Palestinians and the Israelis are negotiating. Everybody knows that they are in Cairo, and everybody knows that they are discussing security arrangements in Gaza and Jericho. Therefore, I would not describe the talks here as secret.

[Beck] Do you believe this quiet climate was necessary to hold the talks?

[Musa] It was definitely necessary.

[Beck] Would you recommend to the Syrians that they enter the same kind of negotiations to enable a breakthrough?

[Musa] Such quiet talks could also be held with the Syrians. The question is not whether the talks will be held or not, but when, how, and under what circumstances.

[Beck] President Mubarak and you were very optimistic about the chances of Israel and Syria attaining an agreement by the end of 1993. Is that still possible or will the agreement be postponed to the spring of 1994?

[Musa] We still believe it is possible. We spoke about a date around the end of the year. We did not mention a specific date, such as 31 December. We are still optimistic.

[Beck] Will Christopher's visit enable a breakthrough on the Syrian track?

[Musa] Yes, I hope so.

[Beck] It has been reported that Christopher will propose a gradual withdrawal in exchange for a gradual normalization to the Israelis and the Syrians. Does such a formula ensure progress?

[Musa] It seems a good idea, but it is up to the Syrians and the Israelis to decide. They will have the final say. For our part, we are eagerly awaiting Christopher's visit to the region.

[Beck] Is Syrian public opinion ready for peace with Israel, or is al-Asad taking a big risk by pushing for progress?

[Musa] The basic idea is that progress should be visible to the Syrian people for them to believe in peace. That is why Christopher's proposals can help turn around the situation from doubts and suspicions to trust, security, and willingness to enter a phase of peace. The Syrian and Israeli people need proper preparation. I believe the process of preparing public opinion has begun in both countries.

[Beck] Judging from your talks with the Syrian leadership, has Damascus been convinced of the seriousness of the Rabin government to reach peace, or are the Syrians still doubtful about Israel's intentions?

[Musa] Public opinion in Syria and the Syrian leadership were disappointed by Israel's declared position, according to which Israel cannot digest two agreements simultaneously. This position has raised doubts as to Israel's intentions vis a vis the Golan Heights, and regarding its readiness to reach an agreement on this issue in the near future. However, we are all making efforts to clear up doubts on both sides and permit the two parties to reach an agreement as soon as possible.

[Beck] Will the Syrians allow the settlements to remain in place on the Golan Heights or have they adopted the Egyptian model [according to which all Israeli settlements in the Sinai Peninsula were uprooted following the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel]?

[Musa] I believe that the Egyptian model will serve as the example for the agreement with Syria. The Egyptian model, however, is full of details and is based on the principle of land for peace—full peace in return for full withdrawal. Therefore, this is the example both sides should adhere to.

[Beck] King Husayn is due to arrive in Cairo in several days. Will you encourage him to be more daring and to come out publicly with details of his future agreements with Israel.

[Musa] King Husayn is quite daring enough and he does not need any advice. He is a very brave man when it comes to peacemaking efforts and ending the climate of war and hostility in the region.

[Beck] Will the king meet Prime Minister Rabin soon, before Syrian President al-Asad does so?

[Musa] I have no idea, you have to ask the Jordanians about that.

[Beck] Lately, there have been reports that Iraq has signalled its desire to make peace with Israel. Are these signals on the level or just a trick?

[Musa] I do not have any detailed information confirming that such a message was indeed sent. Nor do I know whether Israel indeed received such a message, or what Iraq's exact position is. Therefore, I cannot comment on this matter.

[Beck] Should Iraq be brought into the peace process?

[Musa] Iraq is one of the countries in the region. Therefore, it is only natural that it should gain from having peace and seek to contribute to such a situation. If Iraq has indeed signalled that it is prepared to make peace then we must reconsider how to include Iraq in the peace process.

[Beck] The Arab League yesterday decided to continue the Arab boycott against Israel. Until when? Until after an agreement in principle is reached with Syria?

[Musa] It is very important to achieve agreement on all four negotiation tracks. We are talking about a comprehensive peace. Once a comprehensive peace is guaranteed and agreed upon—regardless of details and timetables—many problems will simply resolve themselves. We must patiently go about resolving the existing obstacles. There are many problems that remain unresolved, not only with regard to the Arab boycott. Many of us consider the settlements to be the major problem, the refugee issue, Jerusalem. We have so many problems that we cannot afford to focus on one of them, we have to make sure to resolve all the problems at once.

[Beck] There has been a significant improvement in relations between Egypt and Israel over the past two months. Is this the end of the "cold peace."

[Musa] I have never believed in this so-called cold peace. This was how you described it. Peace is peace. Nevertheless, many steps have been taken in order to improve relations and expand cooperation between the two countries. These steps were also designed to help the peace process. We have very optimistic hopes for the region's future after a settlement is reached on the basis of land for peace.

Mubarak To Meet 'Arafat, Christopher

NC2411063593 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 24 Nov 93

[From the press review]

[Text] AL-AHRAM reports that in the next few days Cairo will be the scene of intensive diplomatic activity to give momentum to the peace efforts on the Palestinian, Syrian, Jordanian, and Lebanese tracks with Israel. In this regard, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will visit Egypt next week to meet with President Husni Mubarak. President Mubarak is scheduled to meet with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher on 4 December.

U.S. 'Double Standard' on Nuclear Weapons Decried

NC2411102493 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 17 Nov 93 p 2

[Article by Muhammad Sayyid Ahmad: "Clinton Supports 'Nuclear Apartheid'!"]

[Text] Clinton has declared that he will not permit North Korea to build a nuclear bomb, noting that such attempts by certain countries justify intervention in line with current international law. Clinton's remarks gave South Korean President Kim Yong-sam an opportunity to urge Washington to set a deadline for North Korea's compliance with international inspection of its nuclear activities.

The big question is: How can the U.S. President justify these threats vis-a-vis his total silence about Israel's nuclear arsenal? Again, is the semiultimatum addressed to North Korea about to be addressed to other countries accused by Washington of similar conduct, such as Pakistan and Libya? Is Washington supposed to deal with these two countries the same way it dealt with Iraq after its Gulf war defeat? In light of its silence vis-a-vis Israel's nuclear arsenal, can Washington claim it is not using a double standard?

In the context of the current legality, using a double nuclear standard is not limited to the above points. It touches the core of the foundations of the "new world order" and poses a necessary question: Why are some countries licensed to be members of the so-called "nuclear club", but not others? Why do the five permanent members of the UN Security Council have the right to possess nuclear weapons, but not others? Why are other countries, such as Israel and South Africa, allowed

to continue making nuclear weapons in secret and surreptitiously join the "nuclear club"? How can this conform with a "world order" that theoretically must include everyone?

It might not be easy, in practical terms, to immediately eliminate the existing nuclear arsenals that were built during the Cold War. For technical reasons, their dismantling will take years. Still, is there a plan to completely eliminate these arsenals and establish international deterrents that ban proliferation to other countries? Or does the current plan actually seek to perpetuate the existing "double standard" and entrench a form of nuclear "apartheid," meaning that some countries will have the right to join the "club" but others—that have suspect intentions—must be relentlessly prevented from doing so?

One inescapable observation: A basic reason for continuing to treat Russia as a superpower is not that it is currently qualified to pursue a world policy worthy of a superpower but that it has a nuclear arsenal—the second largest. This proves that possession of a nuclear arsenal does not necessarily bring punishment but, indeed, might bring a reward, such as elevating a particular country to superpower status regardless of the deterioration afflicting it in all spheres except the nuclear one.

Nuclear armament permits no piecemeal treatment. Unless firm rules govern everyone, one should not embrace the current campaigns to punish some countries while remaining silent about others and accepting and encouraging their activities.

Editorial Criticizes U.S.-Israeli Aircraft Deal

NC2311184993 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 17 Nov 93 p 1

[Editorial: "Pax Americana"]

[Text] The U.S. stance is strange. The United States, which is sponsoring the peace talks and is calling for peace, is providing Israel with the most sophisticated aircraft. Israel will thus become the first country after the United States to use this type of aircraft.

What is strange is that these 20 aircraft, worth $1.8 billion, are not being given at Israel's request. U.S. Defense Secretary Les Aspen himself offered these sophisticated planes to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin during their meeting two days ago.

The danger of this deal is that these planes give Israel superiority in the entire Middle East.

The step that followed was not less dangerous than the first one. The U.S. defense secretary pledged to provide Israel with all the information picked up by U.S. spy satellites. Rabin also secured a U.S. pledge to help Israel develop its weapons and missiles.

This issue exposes the intentions of Israel and the United States together. It reveals their real intentions when they meet behind closed doors. If the United States is serious about supporting the peace process, why is it opening its arsenal to Israel to take from it whatever it wants? Is this the pax Americana?

Shouldn't the United States have postponed these deals until the peace talks are concluded? Or is it offering Israel these weapons to strengthen its position at the negotiating table with the Arab parties?

Probably the United States wants to twist the arms of the Arab negotiators until they soften up and comply with all the U.S.-Israeli demands. Otherwise, is there any other interpretation for what is happening between the two allies?

U.S. Stance on Arab Boycott Criticized

NC2311124693 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 16 Nov 93 p 2

[From the "Comment" column by Ahmad Hasan: "The Sponsor's Stick"]

[Text] It appears that the "U.S. sponsor" has decided to remove its "neutral mediator" mask and has raised its stick against everyone.

This is exactly the sentiment U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, the second man in the U.S. Department of Commerce, expressed when he asked a committee of the department's experts and officials to prepare a detailed report on the damages that U.S. companies have suffered as a result of the Arab boycott of Israel. This step paves the way for imposing trade sanctions against the Arabs or drawing up a legal motion demanding an end to this boycott.

According to the Israeli Central Bank, this boycott is costing Israel $1 billion a year, but it constitutes one of the most important cards in the Arabs' hand at the negotiating table. In light of fears about the collapse of Arab coordination and the success of the Israeli negotiators in creating several gaps in the Arab negotiating front, will the U.S. "sponsor" seek to wrest this card from the Arabs, even if it is the last one in the Arabs' hands?!

In addition, while this boycott represents the only card in the Arabs' hands, Israel has been making plans to bypass it through what it terms the "Middle East Market," in which it will be the hub. Israel is seeking to control the economies of the region through this market, especially since the notion of establishing the Greater Israel of the Torah through military invasion has become mere idiocy and is now an obsolete and nonexistent idea in the political lexicon.

Israel, which is trying to convince everybody that peace has been achieved, has started to reap the benefits at the political level. The latest economic reports are predicting a surge in the Israeli economy and a doubling in the revenue of its sectors, such as tourism, which brought

$1.8 billion to Israel last year, according to a report issued recently by the Israeli "Hapo'alim" Bank.

It is quite certain that Israel will not miss the opportunity to benefit from this U.S. measure, even though it does not appear to be in dire need of it after having dealt—and continuing to deal—with the boycott issue in its own way.

Hence, we have the right to ask the U.S.—the sole "sponsor" of the peace process now that the Russian "sponsor" needs somebody to take care of it—whether it is still committed to the role of "neutral mediator"?!

Deputy Prime Minister on Regional Cooperation

NC2311194993 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 19 Nov 93 pp 26-28

[Interview with Dr. Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture, by Sana' al-Sa'id; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Sa'id] Amid reports of the possible creation of an economic group including the states of the region, the question is whether the current Arab states are really qualified for a joint market with Israel. Is the stage set for such a development?

[Wali] The stage is set for an economic entity made up of the states of the region. This became possible thanks to three major world developments. First, the fall of the Berlin wall and the subsequent unification of Germany. West Germany bore the burden of developing East Germany, making people feel that the two countries that were defeated in the past—Germany and Japan—are now among the world's most economically powerful states.

The second development was the collapse of the Soviet Union, which came as a total surprise.

The third development was the Gaza-Jericho agreement, which will have positive ramifications throughout the Arab world. Peace will be achieved on all fronts by the end of this year, and this will limit the power of the extremists in the Arab region. It will mean that the states that sponsor extremism will have to change their behavior—states like Iran, Iraq, Sudan, and some factions in Algeria and Libya. Many countries have already understood this situation and have changed their policies, like Yemen, which held wonderful elections but is currently experiencing a traditional crisis between the president and his deputy and between the north and the south. The essence of this crisis is the presence of different regimes. [passage omitted]

[Al-Sa'id] But Israel is not an Arab country to be included in an economic entity with the states of the region.

[Wali] It is possible to have an entity grouping all states of the region if they are linked by economic interests.

[Al-Sa'id] Won't these interests clash?

[Wali] No, they will not. It is possible to have integration, not contradiction.

[Al-Sa'id] Is it not strange that we insist on a Middle East market including Israel while we ignore our geographic neighbors with which we have common interests, such as Iran and Turkey?

[Wali] Turkey is not far from Israel; it was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic representation with Israel. Turkey, Israel, Lebanon, and other states in the region will be parties to the tourism agreement that will soon be signed.

[Al-Sa'id] Some say that the main purpose of establishing an economic group in the region is to change the identity of the Middle East as an Arab and Islamic region.

[Wali] The economic group primarily aims to serve the interests of the region's states and peoples, not to change its identity.

[Al-Sa'id] If Israel is a geographic neighbor, we must determine the shape of our relations with it in a way that maintains our security, economic, and political interests.

[Wali] Ambition for economic success does not mean relinquishment of security.

[Al-Sa'id] But how can we establish an economic group under a strategic security imbalance? Israel possesses a nuclear arsenal.

[Wali] First, Israel is one of the states that began early to transform its military industries into civilian ones; they did it four years ago. Perhaps Israel's long-term view of the sea water desalination plant indicates that the nuclear energy will be used for reconstruction, not destruction.

[Al-Sa'id] Are there fears that Israel may turn into a ruler governing the Middle East and using all its resources for its own purposes?

[Wali] Absolutely not. We have had relations for 15 years and Israel has never thought that it was superior to Egypt or that it was controlling anything. There are relations of cooperation and mutual benefits between us. [passage omitted]

[Al-Sa'id] Some believe that the Middle East market is being forced on the region by the United States and that Washington wants to impose a new era of tutelage.

[Wali] There is absolutely no tutelage in this regard. As I said earlier, there have been three developments: the fall of the Berlin wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the Gaza-Jericho agreement. The latter development will have many consequences that need elaborate studies.

[Al-Sa'id] The Palestinian-Israeli talks are not proceeding without difficulties.

[Wali] The process is over and peace will soon be achieved on all fronts.

[Al-Sa'id] Including the Syrian front?

[Wali] Yes. There will be a breakthrough [intilaqah] before the end of this year. The negotiations are continuing; let us wait and see.

[Al-Sa'id] There are some who think that the establishment of a Middle Eastern common market will lead to Iran's isolation.

[Wali] Iran's isolation will take place through peace. If peace becomes firm in our minds and becomes the basis of our cause, there will be no more need for violence, war, hijacking of planes, or any other acts of violence. Consequently, extremism will diminish and peaceful coexistence will prevail. This will be the fundamental change in the area that will be followed by many developments. [passage omitted]

[Al-Sa'id] If we consider the possibility of the establishment of an economic group in the area, what will be Egypt's role and importance in this group?

[Wali] Egypt will have a major and pivotal role. The largest 40 European companies have already noted that Egypt is a basic factor in any agreement to be concluded in the area. This opinion was not created in a vacuum. Egypt has the most skilled labor and the lowest wages in the area. This is in addition to the fact that any economic market in the area can depend on 100 billion pounds held by Egyptians that are still uninvested. If the Egyptians are reassured about the new developments, they will invest these funds and participate in joint projects. Egypt relies on available funds, skilled labor, and advanced technology.

[Al-Sa'id] But there is still a technological gap between us and Israel?

[Wali] There is no gap. They are advanced in some things and we are advanced in others.

[Al-Sa'id] Is there a balance and equality?

[Wali] Of course, there is a balance and equality, and we deal with Israel on this basis. There is an existing balance in agriculture, for example. They are advanced in some things and we are advanced in other things. [passage omitted]

[Al-Sa'id] Therefore, it is not correct that the establishment of a Middle Eastern market is designed to strangle Egypt and seize its markets in the Gulf?

[Wali] This is not correct. This is supported by the fact that negotiations are currently taking place between some Arab chambers of commerce and Israel to establish relations. Meetings took place in Morocco on 30 October between representatives of an Arab state and Israel. Those who say that an economic group in the area represents a threat to Egypt are mistaken. On the contrary, it represents a unique opportunity for Egypt. There is no problem. Egypt is a principal state in this area for two reasons: because the Egyptians have 100 billion pounds looking for investment, and because Egypt has skilled labor and it represents a big market that can absorb production.

[Al-Sa'id] A market that absorbs production but does not export?

[Wali] Egypt can seek protection for its goods through the GATT agreement. It can impose duties. If your product is of inferior quality, it is possible to allow temporary competition until quality improves. In other words, Egypt is able to control the situation.

[Al-Sa'id] This means that there is no fear in Egypt if such an economic group were established at present?

[Wali] There is no fear, provided Egypt hastens to become the main pillar of this group. This will not happen unless we open lines of communication with others and do not close the doors to cooperation in joint projects between Egypt and Israel and the exchange of technology. There is also the area of tourism. I think that an agreement will soon be signed among Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, and Israel. Such an agreement indicates that a tourist country must believe in cooperation.

[Al-Sa'id] There are ideas and expectations for the establishment of joint projects in the electricity field?

[Wali] Yes, electricity and gas projects.

[Al-Sa'id] What about reported plans to supply Israel with water?

[Wali] This is not true. Israel has not raised the issue of water in all the 12 years I have been in this ministry. [passage omitted]

Musa Confers With Visiting Burundian Minister

NC2311090193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1930 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] Cairo, 22 Nov (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met this evening with Paul Minbari, Burundian minister of state for cooperation [name and title as received], who is currently visiting Cairo.

The Burundian minister said after the meeting that he handed 'Amr Musa two messages from the Burundian prime minister to President Husni Mubarak and Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi. He added that his talks with the foreign minister dealt with the developments in Burundi and ways to find a peaceful settlement to the conflict in his country in the wake of the recent coup there.

In his statement, the Burundian minister voiced his country's appreciation for the [words indistinct] decision to send peacekeeping forces to Burundi. He noted that the situation in his country is returning to normal. The Burundian minister praised President Mubarak's stand

on the abortive coup in Burundi. He expressed appreciation for Egypt's condemnation of the coup. He also voiced his country's thanks for Egypt's medical assistance following the coup.

Musa Meets Somali Faction Leader

NC2411115393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0943 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] Cairo, 24 Nov (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today conferred with General Bila Raflah Gouled [name as received], deputy leader of the Somali National Front [al-jabhah al-wataniyah al-sumaliyah], who is currently visiting Cairo. After the meeting, the Somali figure said that he had conveyed to Minister Musa the Somali people's thanks to President Mubarak, the current OAU chairman, for his sincere support of Somalia. He added that he and Musa had discussed the current situation in Somalia, the recent developments in Mogadishu, and the topics that will be discussed during the conference on humanitarian aid to Somalia, which is scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa on Monday.

He added that he gave Minister Musa a message to President Mubarak from the 12 Somalia organizations based in Kismaayo. In the message, the organizations urge President Mubarak to continue his efforts to resolve the Somali problem and to prepare for a new national reconciliation conference in Somalia that will be attended by all Somali factions, he said. Today's meeting was also attended by Abdallah Hassan, Somali ambassador to Egypt.

United Somali Congress Official Arrives in Cairo

NC2411065193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2210 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Cairo, 23 Nov (MENA)—Abdulle Tahir, the United Somali Congress' foreign relations official, [name and title as received] arrived in Cairo this evening for a six-day visit to Egypt. He is scheduled to meet with several Foreign Ministry, Information Ministry, and Arab League officials to discuss developments in Somalia.

Tahir will later leave Cairo for Addis Ababa to attend a conference on Somalia on 29 November. This meeting will include representatives of the Somali factions, international organizations, the Arab League, and the Horn of Africa's standing committee. An Egyptian delegation will participate in the conference for the first time to emphasize the Egyptian role in the Somali issue.

The conference will discuss ways to implement the previous Addis Ababa resolutions.

South African Agreement on Constitution Welcomed

NC2411102293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0902 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] Cairo, 24 Nov (MENA)—Egypt today welcomed the historic agreement on the provisional constitution in South Africa, reached by the various parties after long negotiations to establish democratic rule. The Foreign Ministry official spokesman said that this agreement represents a practical foundation upon which to establish democratic nonracist rule to prepare for a new era of freedom and democracy in South Africa. The spokesman said that Egypt congratulates all parties that participated in the negotiations. Egypt calls on the other important parties to join the agreement and participate in the general elections scheduled for April.

Mubarak Receives Chinese Delegation

NC2311191993 Cairo ESC Television in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Today, President Mubarak received the members of the Standing Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress led by Vice Chairman Wang Bingqian.

The meeting was attended by People's Assembly Speaker Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur and Dr. Muhammad 'Abdallah, head of the People's Assembly Foreign Relations Committee.

[Begin Surur recording] The vice chairman of the Standing Committee expressed China's appreciation of President Mubarak's achievements at home and abroad. He praised the friendship and close cooperation between China and Egypt. He renewed the Chinese political leadership's invitation to President Mubarak to visit China. He reviewed China's economic reform experience. He praised the economic reform initiated by President Mubarak, which began before the economic reform in China. He expressed China's interest in achieving peace in the Middle East and the hope that peace between Israel and the Arab states will be established on a just basis. [end recording]

The vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress said the meeting dealt with ways to strengthen friendship and cooperation between China and Egypt in every domain. He said the delegation expressed China's appreciation of Egypt for its constant call to achieve a political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and for Egypt's positive efforts to push peace forward in the Middle East. He said he appreciated Egypt's gigantic achievement in developing its national economy and raising the people's living standards. He indicated that China will work to benefit from Egypt's experience in this field.

Al-Alfi Denies Human Rights Violations Reports

NC2311162493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1335 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Cairo, 23 Nov (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has said that Egypt respects human rights. He also said that the police adhere to the law and uphold human rights in all their activities and while confronting outlaws. Al-Alfi made these remarks on the sidelines of the International Conference on Confronting Natural Disasters, which opened in Cairo today.

Asked about some international organizations' reports that Egypt has been violating human rights, al-Alfi stressed that these reports are "not objective" and depend for their information on defendants who inflict injury on themselves in an attempt to distort Egypt's image and undermine the security men who sacrifice themselves to defend the security of the homeland and citizen. Al-Alfi said these statements in human rights reports "did not come from official quarters."

Al-Alfi explained that there are fewer acts of violence in Egypt than elsewhere and that foreign reports of human rights violations in Egypt are baseless lies. He said there were more police victims of acts of violence and terrorism than there were terrorist and criminal elements killed in these incidents. This proves that the police do not use their firearms haphazardly and don't open fire first.

Al-Alfi added that some police officers and personnel have committed individual excesses; they have been referred to trial. Some of them have been imprisoned for violating human rights. But he said these cases do not mean there are human rights violations in Egypt.

Al-Alfi denounced reports that police officers violate human rights during their security campaigns against terrorists and criminals. He noted that police martyr Captain 'Ali Khatir paid with his life for his humanity, which prevented him from opening fire on terrorist Hasan Shihatah Badran, who hid behind his children and treacherously opened fire on the police officer.

Concluding his remarks, al-Alfi said no more licenses were being issued to citizens to carry semi-automatic guns. He said his Ministry is reviewing the licenses issued in the past. Licenses for those requiring the use of semi-automatic guns will be renewed, while licenses for those not requiring this type of weapon will not.

Activities of Security Agencies in Asyut Viewed

NC2211072893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2210 GMT 21 Nov 93

[Text] Cairo, 21 Nov (MENA)—A responsible source in the Interior Ministry stated this evening that news agencies' reports that the security agencies in Asyut have requested the National Democratic Party to prepare armed groups to participate in confronting acts of terrorism in Asyut are absolutely groundless. The source said that the security forces are fully capable of confronting security needs in all areas. He stressed that the security forces are capable of confronting all outlaws through their daily security campaigns and that these campaigns are regularly announced through [words indistinct].

The Asyut Governorate held a meeting between the popular and executive leaderships to enlighten the citizens about the importance of responding to instructions and to help the police force to make the traffic campaign being carried out by the Interior Ministry throughout the Egyptian governorates successful.

The Asyut Security Directorate issued periodical leaflets to enhance the activities of mayors, tribal chiefs, and guards to make this campaign successful and to hunt down fugitive criminals. Certain news agencies, however, distorted these security instructions [words indistinct]. The Interior Ministry urges international news agencies to verify their reports so as not to harm the public interests and the struggle of police agencies at this stage.

Cairo Students Released, Apologize for Riot

NC2311194293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1630 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Cairo, 23 Nov (MENA)—The students who rioted at Cairo University have been released. The prosecution had ordered that the 26 students be jailed pending interrogation. Their release comes at the request of Dr. Mufid Shihab, the president of Cairo University. Dr. Mufid Shihab announced that he made the request because he was concerned about the future of the students and in light of the appeal submitted by the students themselves, their guardians, and their professors. In these appeals, the students expressed their regret for what they did. They apologized for their behavior, which did not go along with the university's traditions. They pledged that they would not repeat such behavior. A decision was made to refer these students to the disciplinary court via the disciplinary committees at their respective colleges.

Dr. Mufid Shihab affirmed in his statement that while the university's administration cares for the affairs of the students and is concerned with their interests, it must firmly confront any behavior that disturbs the peace and traditions of the university and violates the law.

Libya

Results of Arab League Emergency Session Welcomed

LD2311152493 Tripoli JANA in English 1428 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Tripoli, al-Harth [November] 23, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The secretariat of the General Peoples' Committee for Unity issued the following statement:

In realisation of the extent of dangers to national security and the nature of the conflict with the Zionist enemy, in view of the dealings made by some Arab parties with the Zionist entity and the holding of meetings with the Zionists, in realisation of the responsibility it holds vis a vis the dangers of the Arab position, given that these meetings and contacts are a breach of all Arab resolutions and treaties, the Great Socialist Peoples Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, in line with the charter of the League of Arab States therefore called for the holding of an emergency session of the Council of the Arab League.

The council then met in an emergency session on the 22 November 1993 to examine the appropriate way to deal with the situation to prevent disunity in Arab ranks and to call on the members of the Arab league to abide by the provisions and spirit of the Arab League Charter and Arab resolutions adopted by various Arab summits, as well as Arab treaties and agreements adopted by the Arab league. This includes the resolution stipulating a boycott of the Zionists given that any dealing with the Zionists is a matter which concerns the higher interests of the Arab world, and its future generations. Such dealings also threaten the Arab nation's Pan Arab nature. It is important to note that the Israelis continue to occupy and commit aggression against the Arabs in the Palestinian lands and other occupied Arab lands. The Israelis are committing the ugliest manner of oppression against the Palestinian people, they continue to build settlements on Palestinian land and thousands of Jews are emigrating there from all over the world. Then there are Israel's weapons of mass destruction which are a threat to every Arab country.

During this time, several calls were made by Arab countries to make contact with the Israelis and to establish links with them in violation of the Arab boycott resolutions issued in May 1951, and the Israelis will succeed in obtaining economic assistance from these Arab countries even though the Arab world is still at war with the Israelis.

At an emergency session, the Arab League's Council issued a statement which stated that the Council of the Arab League, at its 14th ordinary session held on the 19th of May, 1951, established an office for the boycott with the establishment of other specialised offices in the Arab countries to deal with the implementation of the boycott. These were set up in all the Arab countries. The council decided: That the Arab boycott of Israel is inextricably linked to Israel's withdrawal from all Palestinian land including Jerusalem as well as Israel's compliance with all UN resolutions.

The Arab response to the Great Jamahiriyah's appeal represents a victory for Arab concerted will and action, which proved that the Arabs desired a comprehensive and just peace. This would be achieved with the return of all Palestinians to their land and through establishing their state on all of their land. The Arabs are not enemies of the Jews, but of the Zionist movement which imposes its existence by force on the land of Palestine. The Arab League resolution set restrictions on the rapprochement made between some Arab parties with the Zionist enemy.

The statement reiterated that any political, economic or other contact made with the Israelis is betrayal and breaches all resolutions and agreements Arab treaties, [words indistinct].

While the General Peoples' Committee is highlighting the importance of the Arab League Council's resolutions, adopted at its emergency session, it also reaffirms the depth of its appreciation for the Arab League and Arab governments for their awareness of their pan Arab responsibility and their commitment to the charter of the league, whether provisions, or resolutions showing the victory achieved by Arab will and attempting to protect the higher interests of the Arab world.

Morocco

Prime Minister Presents Government Program

LD2311200393 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 1633 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Government Program presented by Prime Minister Mohamed Lamrani at the House of Representatives in Rabat—live]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate. Prayers and peace be upon our master, God's messenger, and his family and followers.

Respected speaker of the House of Representatives and deputies. His Majesty King Hassan II honored me and appointed me as prime minister in his government. I consider this honor as a commission placing great responsibilities on the shoulders of the members of government, as it came after an amendment to the Constitution which increased the powers of the legislative and executive authorities and achieved great progress along our constitutional march, which is led by our monarch with great wisdom. [passage omitted]

Mr. Speaker and respected deputies. In accordance with Chapter 59 of the Constitution, it pleases me to submit to you the program which his majesty's government intends to implement. It includes the broad lines of the government's work in the fields of economic, social, cultural and foreign policy.

First, we must recall the firm choices of our people, which are based on Islam; a constitutional monarchy; preserving the national territorial integrity; consolidating the state of law; democratic institutions; preserving human rights and dignity; open mindedness; tolerance; closing ranks with the Arab world, Islamic nations, and African countries; consolidating the unity of our Arab Maghreb; and commitment to international legitimacy.

The achievement of our territorial integrity from the north to the south is at the forefront of our interests. His majesty's government will remain committed to the achievement of this territorial integrity.

Until the implementation of the confirmation referendum in our Saharan provinces, the royal armed forces, gendarmerie, security forces, and auxiliary forces will remain ready to shoulder responsibilities in defending the country. I take this opportunity to praise, in the name of his majesty's government, the great efforts and sacrifices of these forces, who are under the command of His Majesty King Hassan II.

It pleases me to record with pride his majesty's initiative in creating a ministry in charge of human rights, as the interest in human rights is merely a confirmation of the immortal Islamic values.

Mr. Speaker, respected members of the House of Representatives. I would like here to affirm to you that the government is determined to give, before anything else, dynamism to its relations with the legislative for his majesty, as he has asserted more than once, that he considers the nation's representatives as his own ministers at the same level as the other ministers in his government.

My hope, therefore, is that all of us will cooperate to shoulder our joint responsibilities within the framework of continuous dialogue during the House sittings or outside them, and that such dialogue will be serious and frank, and will realize the sought-after aims, i.e., the development of the country and the prosperity of our citizens. [passage omitted]

Mr. Speaker, respected members of the House of Representatives. The government, when drawing up its program, takes into account the national sanctities, the cultural and moral ideals of our society and the reasonable liberal choices our country has followed under the wise leadership of his majesty the king. In addition to its respect of the aforementioned ideals, the government will introduce the necessary changes within the framework of democracy, pluralism, and decentralization in a bid to make citizens happier within the framework of freedom, dignity, security, prosperity, and progress in accordance with the Constitution and the new spirit, which will characterize relations between the individual and the state, between him and society, and between him and all other institutions.

The government is therefore proposing a program of action aimed at achieving an economic growth at a continuous high level, which will create the highest possible job opportunities, and whose main task is to give paramount importance to the social and cultural sectors without prejudice to economic and financial basic balances.

This will be possible thanks to the palpable economic development as well as other achievements and reforms at the national and local levels, which have aroused the interest of the country's social and economic interlocutors as well as the interest of foreign political and economic observers, a matter which has attracted the interest of foreign investors who saw in the constitutional monarchy system the best guarantor for continuity and stability. Such achievements would, moreovore, allow our country to follow ambitious economic and social policies which would pay special attention to the needs of the inhabitants, particularly those of low incomes, and would pay the necessary attention to rural areas and the consolidation of decentralization.

Thus the government is committed to pursuing an economic and financial policy characterized by continuing structural reforms and keenness in their implementation, and by following the lofty continuous directives of his majesty the king within a framework of an economic growth strategy in the medium and long term based on the following fundamental priorities:

1. A comprehensive reform of the system of encouraging investment through a new framework characterized by harmony, stability, and the application of further measures. [passage omitted]

2. The development of a policy of financing the economy through the use of the most advanced and applicable mechanisms to mobilize national savings and foreign capital to increase economic growth.

The government will be keen to apply reforms related to the banking system and the money market, laying down draft bills concerning credits and tax coordination between the various mechanisms; financing the financial mechanisms and the mutual guarantee system in the field of credits; and creating a market for securities and a market for convertible currencies.

3. Speeding up the implementation of the privatization program: The government considers that the reform so far achieved in the system of financial institutions will help the speedy implementation of this program. The government will devote its attention to simplifying the rules of transfer to encourage the insurance and banking sectors and the stock exchange to play a more active role in realizing the privatization operations. It will also seek to rectify the financial condition of the institutions likely to be privatized, and to exert the information effort necessary for this process. [passage omitted]

4. The entrenching of the rule of law in the domain of business: The government intends to create the appropriate conditions to strengthen the climate of trust in the field of economic and social relations, which will in turn encourage investments. For this purpose, the government will seek to lay down legal regulations and ensure their implementations without delay, in addition to fighting smuggling and avoidance of the payment of taxes. Among the issues having government priority are the law on water supplies, traffic regulations, the Labor Law, the patent system, company laws, the Trade Law, the Maritime Law, the law on insurances, regulation of trade competition, and protection of consumers.

5. Continuation of the implementation of the social development policy in order to improve the living conditions of citizens, particularly in the domains of housing, health, education, sports, culture, environment, and recreation. [passage omitted]

The government will begin implementing this programme in 1994, based on the following aims:

Limiting the deficit in the state budget to a rate not exceeding 1.5 percent of the gross domestic product next year. [passage omitted]

The structures of ministries will be reviewed, with emphasis being placed on the rehabilitation of ethical behavior in the administrative bodies. General inspection in ministries will be strengthened and a general inspectorate for state bodies will be set up. The government will also work to improve the efficiency of administration by speeding up administrative and economic decentralization.

In consideration for the role of justice in safeguarding the balance of society and ensuring citizens' rights, the government will work for the consolidation of the judiciary and to provide the means it requires to carry out its mission fully. [passage omitted] In implementing his majesty's directives, Morocco has continued to follow up constant principles aimed at defending our gains and protecting our national interests. It is natural that the issue of our territorial integrity will be among the priorities of Moroccan diplomacy, and that efforts will continue in order to resolve the Saharan issue in an affirmative and definitive manner.

With regard to international issues, our country will continue to contribute to international efforts in order to safeguard international peace and security, and to encourage cooperation on the basis of joint interests and mutual respect.

On the Maghreban level, the government will make the consolidation of the foundations of the Arab Maghreb Union and the implementation of its stages one of its priorities with all the determination and seriousness they require. Morocco will make its utmost efforts for the restoration of Arab solidarity, particularly in these decisive times, where the Middle East region has entered the stage of establishing peace.

The EC is considered to be a very important partner with regard to Morocco's economy. On this basis, contacts in the framework of partnership, which are in harmony with Morocco's potentialities, are taking place. The government will inform your honorable House the results that are reached and whenever there is something new to report on this issue.

We will also strengthen our relations with the remaining world states, particularly in the American and Asian continents, as well as with the various international organizations.

With regard to Africa, our country will continue to develop and intensify its relations with the states of this continent, thereby stressing the depth of its affiliation to the African community and its commitment to the obligation of effective solidarity.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, those were the broad lines of the government's program, which I hope will enjoy your support and positive vote, knowing that you will have the opportunity to hold a serious debate with the government when it presents the draft finance law, which reflects the reality of its policies, choices and orientations. [passage omitted]

Sudan

TNA Dismisses Salih, Others From Membership

EA2311205593 Omdurman National Unity Radio in English 1500 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] The Transitional National Assembly [TNA] decided at its Monday [23 November] session, which was chaired by its speaker, Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, to drop the membership of a number of deputies of the assembly. They included members of the former Revolution Command Council [RCC]: Major General al-Tijani Adam al-Tahir, Brigadier Sulayman Muhammad Sulayman al-Badri, Colonel Bakri Hasan Salih, and Lieutenant Col. Ibrahim Shams al-Din. The speaker, Khalifah, said the members had lost their membership after the dissolution of the former RCC. Meanwhile, the assembly also decided to drop the membership of each of [as heard]: Maj. Gen. Musa'id al-Numayri [former governor of Northern State], 'Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Hamdi [former finance minister], [the late] Lt. Col. Paul Reth Klem, and Hamid Bashir Hamid.

[Khartoum SUNA in Arabic at 1500 GMT on 23 November in a related report adds: "The vice president, al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, lost his TNA membership."]

Opposition Leader Arrested After Critical Remarks

PM2211155293 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Nov 93 p 1

[Report by 'Uthman Mirghani: "Sudanese Opposition Leader Arrested"]

[Text] London—Sudanese opposition Democratic Unionist Party [DUP] officials abroad have said that security authorities in Khartoum have arrested Sayyid Ahmad al-Husayn, the party's deputy secretary general. They attributed this to recent statements in which he criticized conditions in the country. DUP officials told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that security authorities stormed Sayyid Ahmad al-Husayn's house the night before last and took him to prison.

Al-Husayn spoke at a political seminar organized three days ago by Omdurman University to mark the anniversary of the Sudanese peace agreement signed in November 1988 by Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani, leader of the DUP, and John Garang, leader of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement.

Sayyid Ahmad al-Husayn has recently intensified his public criticisms of the current regime and its policies, which he believes are responsible for people's suffering and a threat to the country's unity.

Al-Bashir Appeals to Citizens To Join Defense Camps

EA2311133593 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 2245 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] Lieutenant General al-Bashir, president of the Republic, has appealed to citizens to join the people's defense camps to defend the faith and the homeland in the interest of overall national unity. He said this on 21 November when he addressed a public rally in the area of northern al-Hafir (Mushhub). He also said that the country was moving ahead with its declared policies and would not stray from its orientations aimed at the independence of its political decisions. His Excellency called on the people of the area to increase production and called for the merger of agricultural projects as well as aid for the Hafir agricultural company to help it perform its role in this connection. He announced support for the electrical project in the area amounting to 5 million pounds.

Al-Turabi Views Upcoming Islamic Conference

EA2211201093 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] Dr. Hasan 'Abdallah al-Turabi, the secretary general of the Arab and Islamic Peoples' Congress, has said invitations to attend the next conference have been sent out to over 500 persons in the different continents of the world representing Islamic forces or Islamic media, in addition to other quarters interested in the Islamic movements in history. Dr. al-Turabi added in a statement to our radio correspondent that the conference would basically concern itself with the issues of Afghanistan, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan and other issues affecting Muslim minorities in various parts of the world.

He said there had never been such a big conference in the history of Islam as this one, which Sudan was to host. He stressed, in this connection, that Sudan had become famous in the world for its Islamic personality. That was why Muslims were interested in Sudan now that it was no longer weak materially or backward in its historical (?gains). He said attention was today being focused on Sudan by its enemies who feared its awakening and the linkage of international interests with that awakening. They also feared that the linkage might be contagious in its effect of moving other forces, which could disturb the equilibrium of arrogance, colonialism, injustice and the world economy.

Dr. al-Turabi returned to the country yesterday after visits to Pakistan and Afghanistan, which lasted a week, during which he held consultations aimed at uniting the Afghan factions.

Authorities Arrest 3 Egyptian Officials 23 Nov

NC2311142493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1345 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Khartoum, 23 Nov (MENA)—The Sudanese security authorities today arrested Hammad Isma'il, headmaster of the Egyptian Embassy's school in Khartoum; Henri Salamah, manager of the Egyptian Club belonging to the embassy; and Hasan 'Abd-al-'Azim, the accountant at the Egyptian Trade Center in Khartoum.

These people were arrested while they were performing their duties. The Sudanese authorities did not provide any explanation for this measure.

The arrests come after the Sudanese authorities recently released three Egyptians who had been arrested last June.

Relations With Libya, Lockerbie Crisis Discussed

EA2211200593 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1510 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] Khartoum, 22 Nov (SUNA)—The chairman of the Transitional National Assembly's [TNA] foreign relations committee, Professor Shakir al-Sarraj, yesterday met the secretary of the Libyan brotherhood bureau in Khartoum, with whom he discussed bilateral relations and methods of strengthening them in the interests of the two fraternal countries. Also discussed were the latest developments affecting the Lockerbie crisis. Prof. al-Sarraj gave the ambassador a copy of the statement recently issued by the TNA expressing solidarity with the Libyan jamahiriyah.

Tunisia

Social Liberal Party Supports President

LD1911213493 Tunis RTT Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 19 Nov 93

[Text] The Social Liberal Party [al-Hizb al-Ijtima'i al-Tahrruri] issued a communique today stating that the party political bureau decided at its regular meeting held on Thursday 18 November to support the nomination of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali as president of the republic for the next presidential term. This decision was made in response to the clear consensus over this choice expressed by the liberal militants and in consideration of what President Ben Ali has done since he became president of all Tunisians for the benefit of the people.

MDS Backs Ben Ali in Presidential Election

LD2211102793 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Excerpt] The Movement of Democratic Socialists [MDS] has decided to nominate President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali at the forthcoming presidential elections and it has called on the signatories to the national pact to hold a meeting to nominate the president at these elections.

This decision was made yesterday during a meeting held by the movement in the capital, Tunis, under the chairmanship of [MDS secretary general] Mohamed Moaada, and attended by members of the MDS national council and representatives of the federations [trade union and vocational organizations'] and branches affiliated to the movement. [passage omitted]

GCC Interior Ministers Conclude Meeting 23 Nov

JN2411075193 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0530 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 Nov (WAKH)—The interior ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] concluded their 12th meeting in Abu Dhabi this evening.

Emirian Interior Minister Staff Lieutenant General Dr. Muhammad Sa'id al-Badi delivered a speech in which he praised the positive discussions held during the meeting—discussions which reflect a joint desire to support Gulf security coordination and entrench cooperation among the various security bodies.

He also praised the ideas and recommendations reached and said that these recommendations will receive the support and attention of GCC leaders during their next summit. He added: We are looking forward to the results of this summit with hope and great confidence in a bright future.

Bahrain

* Foreign Minister on Peace Talks, Iraq, Lebanon

94AE0029A London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 12 Nov 93 pp 31-33

[Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah, foreign minister, in Manama; date not given]

[Text] Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah is a veteran and astute politician and diplomat, perceptive, insightful, acutely observant, extremely balanced, knowledgeable, highly cultured, and has relations, both worldwide and Arab. AL-HAWADITH interviewed him in his office in Manama, and he spoke to us about various current Gulf, Arab, and international affairs. The following is the text of the interview:

[AL-HAWADITH] What do you think of the situation in Lebanon and the likelihood of its attaining stability?

[Al Khalifah] Lebanon has been through a very difficult and dangerous stage, unlike anything in the history of Lebanon and of the whole area. I believe that Lebanon has moved beyond this stage. Lebanon today is in a state of ongoing development and is continually heading toward stability. I am glad that the Lebanese people have moved toward resolving the disputes.

[AL-HAWADITH] Lebanese President Ilyas Hirawi believes that Lebanon is unfortunate because the day it was decided in al-Ta'if to give Lebanon $1 billion aid from international resources and $1 billion from Arab resources, the Gulf events broke out. And when recently it was decided to give it $500 million to help southern Lebanon, the question of Gaza and Jericho cropped up, and by some magic the aid shifted toward the question of Gaza and Jericho. What is your opinion on this?

[Al Khalifah] In fact we believe that Lebanon is fortunate because it enjoys scientific, cultural, and civilization capabilities. It constantly works for prosperity and growth. I believe that helping Lebanon will continue. I believe that it is helping the West Bank and Gaza Strip and not Jericho that will contribute to Lebanon's stability and will boost its strength, because Lebanon has shouldered the biggest burden of the Palestinian problem.

Everyone who believes in war will inevitably lose. I believe that everybody will benefit from the peace process, and the first to benefit is the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian people have a cause and own the land. Returning the Palestinian people to their land and building the institutions of the Palestinian state or the Palestinian entity will undoubtedly contribute to stability in the area.

The current developments are extremely important for Middle East progress in general. Nobody will lose from these developments. Maybe concessions will have to be made here and there, but making concessions is not a loss.

[AL-HAWADITH] What about the rejectionists and for how long will they continue to reject? Who supports them and backs them?

[Al Khalifah] Rejection and support will always remain a human characteristic and part of man's thoughts. The tendency is toward peace, and the peace process is being given momentum by both sides, Arab and Israeli, toward a comprehensive, lasting, and just solution.

[AL-HAWADITH] With regard to the Syrian front, Syria is the center of gravity in the Middle Eastern situation. Do you believe that Syria is heading toward a peace that will restore all its rights and will be an honorable solution for it?

[Al Khalifah] I believe that what took place on 13 September when the agreement on principles was signed between the PLO and Israel was the beginning. If there is no total withdrawal from the Syrian territories that are internationally recognized as belonging to Syria, I believe that the peace process will not be a peace process, but rather a move toward the peace process. But this is not the required move for a comprehensive, just, and lasting solution.

We stress that Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the Golan Heights is a central and basic issue not only for the Arabs but also for the world, because they are occupied lands that are clearly defined by the United Nations. I stress that a just peace should include this area.

[AL-HAWADITH] It is said that there are plans to abort the entire process by assassinating Yasir 'Arafat and portraying the new entity as it will look then. The Israelis

will tell the world: Look how we have given them everything, and yet the Arabs are in disagreement among themselves.

[Al Khalifah] Any actions of sabotage of this kind or irresponsible actions of this type will harm the peace process. Such actions will benefit nobody. Rather, the reaction will be bad and harmful. We, the Arabs, should resist such trends.

There should be a comprehensive public Arab opinion [against such actions]. Such unacceptable actions could take place, but when they do, they would be contained and isolated and could not achieve their objectives.

Nobody can prevent a terrorist operation, but such actions and their objectives can be aborted. We in the Arab world have experienced such terrorist actions and tasted their damages. But this method of action has been overtaken by time. We should not allow this to happen.

[AL-HAWADITH] What do you think of what has been given to the Palestinians? Is it a state, a semi-state, or a joke of a state?

[Al Khalifah] I can say that it is the beginning of a new stage. The Palestinian has the first and last say on this issue. This is a new start. The Palestinian has begun to talk directly with the Israeli side, and broad outlines have been laid for the West Bank and Gaza. So far Israel says this is an entity and not a state, while the Palestinians say it is a state.

[AL-HAWADITH] Who will resolve this issue of naming?

[Al Khalifah] The question of naming will be resolved by the expected developments. Israel will deal with the area in a manner different from that of the past. I am sure that there will be a Palestinian entity of importance and good structure.

[AL-HAWADITH] Is this entity likely to form a confederation with Jordan?

[Al Khalifah] This matter is up to the Palestinians and Jordanians who will decide whether it is acceptable to them or not.

[AL-HAWADITH] Do you think that Israel is serious about what it is doing or is this just part of a maneuver, a misleading tactic, and an effort to win public opinion by claiming that it took steps toward peace but peace suffered a setback because of others?

[Al Khalifah] I believe that the publicly-stated Israeli policy is serious. By publicly-stated I mean those issues on which we disagree.

Israel says that there will be withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho. But, there are stages that will not lead to a Palestinian state, nor will they lead to total withdrawal from the West Bank. These are the principles about which the Israelis are sincere. But we say this is not what is required; what is required is total withdrawal from the Arab lands it occupied in 1967. The Israelis are serious about the points we disagree with them about.

This is unacceptable to us; the Palestinians too will not accept. We consider what has happened so far as the stage of liberating all the land.

[AL-HAWADITH] What impact does this have on the Gulf states?

[Al Khalifah] The Gulf states have openly welcomed this agreement right from the first moment after it was signed. They also expressed their support for the peace process. The GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] countries issued a statement welcoming and supporting it. The Gulf countries have participated in a Washington conference on Middle East peace.

[AL-HAWADITH] What is Iran's attitude toward this peace, and in what state are its relations with the Gulf states today, following the occupation of the three islands.

[Al Khalifah] The question of Iran's stand toward the peace process is its own business. With regard to Iran's relation with the Gulf states, we in Bahrain have good relations with Iran. We consider Iran as a neighbor in the area, and we are seeking to develop these relations.

With regard to the islands, we have proclaimed our stand in the GCC and in the United Nations—that we reject the principle of unilateral annexation.

Contacts and dialogue between Iran and the UAE [United Arab Emirates] should continue in order to reach an acceptable solution. We encourage this trend and hope that the dialogue might lead to a solution. The GCC has announced its rejection of the principle of annexation.

[AL-HAWADITH] Do you believe that Israel possesses nuclear weapons and, if so, will it keep them, or will peace force it to abandon them and join the countries committed to banning this kind of weapon?

[Al Khalifah] Israel has nuclear weapons. This is a fact that everybody knows. When we talk about peace we believe that nuclear arms and all weapons of mass destruction should be removed from the Middle East. Bahrain adopted a stand on this matter, which it placed on record at the United Nations.

We call for keeping the Middle East region free of these destructive weapons. Israel should implement the principles of peace, which will be for the benefit of everybody. Possession of nuclear weapons has become possible for everybody. For this reason I call for the Middle East region to be free of such destructive weapons.

[AL-HAWADITH] What about Arab reconciliation, the likelihood of an Arab summit, and relations with Iraq?

[Al Khalifah] We deal with Iraq as an Arab Gulf country and harbor love and appreciation for the Iraqi people. We hope that Iraq will enjoy stability and prosperity. After the Gulf war the United Nations adopted resolutions, and all that we are asking for is the implementation of these resolutions. When these resolutions are implemented, all the terrible results that are on everybody's mind will vanish. We call for the implementation of the UN resolutions in order to begin a new chapter.

The Gulf war is a historical event, and we should learn its lesson. As Arabs we should decide that aggression by one Arab state against another should be rejected and opposed. We call for a lasting agreement in order to achieve permanent stability. We reject the idea of one country occupying another.

[AL-HAWADITH] What about Arab reconciliation, and will it be restored?

[Al Khalifah] Very much so. I believe that everything is possible, particularly when we see these world developments, the most recent of which was the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, collapse of Berlin Wall, the dismantling of the Soviet Union, and the Maastricht Treaty, which Europe is preparing to implement not just for economic unity but also for unity in every field and for the creation of the world's biggest market. Many things are happening around us. We should benefit from these developments and try to work together for the sake of the future and of the 21st century.

I call on the Arabs to benefit from this stage, which is more important than bilateral relations. Arab relations should be founded on a solid basis. Before everything else we should respect such a basis. We in the Arab world put our signature on things that we do not implement.

[AL-HAWADITH] Do you believe that what Iraq is doing will delay the establishment of Arab unity or contemplating an Arab unity, thus causing it to suffer a historical setback?

[Al Khalifah] There is no doubt that this has happened. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait has caused a great shock that we must overcome.

We as Arabs should protect the Arab world against any foreign invasion and protect Arab national security.

[AL-HAWADITH] Is Iraq still a source of threat and concern for Kuwait, or do you think that it has abandoned the idea of going back to invading Kuwait?

[Al Khalifah] I hope that Iraq will reconsider its stands and implement the UN resolutions in letter and spirit. I believe that this is the only way to put an end to any possible threat.

[AL-HAWADITH] Is the new world order a cover for the powerful ones to dominate the weak ones, especially U.S. domination and its brandishing the big stick in the face of every weak regime?

[Al Khalifah] In order to answer this question we must go back to history. We are on the peripheries of the 21st century. Technological advancement and tremendous economic strength have developed in many parts of the world while nothing of this has happened in several other parts.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall, the dismantling of the Soviet Union, the establishment of united Europe, the Gulf war, and the emergence of the biggest economic unit in the world, between Canada, the United States, and Mexico. All these developments that are taking place before our eyes should prompt us to read carefully the meaning of the downfall of a superpower like the Soviet Union. I believe that military strength is derived from economic strength.

Because of its economic strength Japan has become a major factor in economic formulas.

In the past the cold war was between two superpowers, and there was a winner and a loser in this game.

[AL-HAWADITH] Briefly, how do you define the new world order?

[Al Khalifah] I define the new order by saying that the regional blocs will have a greater effect in the future, because no superpower is likely to emerge and therefore return to what it used to be in the past.

I think that the balance will be determined by regional communities; Europe as a community; Japan and East Asia as another; and we in the Arab world yet another. These blocs will play a prominent role in the new world order.

[AL-HAWADITH] In your answers you avoid blaming America for playing a role of domination and hegemony.

[Al Khalifah] If it forms powerful blocs, it will impose itself economically, and everyone will listen to its opinion. If it does not establish these power blocs, no one will listen to it.

[AL-HAWADITH] Has Russia ceased to exist as a state, or will it preserve its role after it has ceased to be a giant state?

[illegible]y Russia has been a powerful state with great potential. I believe that Russia will remain as it used to be, and I consider it to be a superpower.

[AL-HAWADITH] Motivated by democracy or by some military domination, a demonstration attacked the parliament.

[Al Khalifah] I believe that Russia is approaching a new stage.

[AL-HAWADITH] Will Gorbachev have any role?

[Al Khalifah] Everything in politics is possible. Political action has a beginning but no end, unless God decrees otherwise.

[AL-HAWADITH] The question of increasing the number of Security Council members is being debated. They talk about nominating Japan and Germany as members. What do you think of this and don't you think that the Arabs should have a candidate for the eighth seat if they become seven with Japan and Germany?

[Al Khalifah] This subject was discussed at the international level. Agreements have been proposed. The Arabs are demanding a permanent seat, and in my speech at the United Nations I supported this project.

But the problem is that a permanent seat has the right of veto. They are talking about a new permanent member without the right of veto.

I wonder how the Arabs would agree on this seat. If this is done in alphabetical order, then each state would be represented once every 44 years, because membership of each state lasts two years.

This subject needs to be studied thoroughly, bearing in mind that the Arabs should play an effective and influential role in this new order, and Arab unity is the basis of everything. I am optimistic about the future.

[AL-HAWADITH] What about the future of Lebanon?

[Al Khalifah] The leadership in Lebanon today augurs well. The Lebanese leadership comprises personalities that are acceptable at the Arab and international level and has wide contacts. With all these elements I hope that there will be a final settlement in order to turn the page on the past so that Lebanon will go forward. The Lebanese people are creative. I am optimistic and, God willing, Lebanon will once again be the beacon of the world as it used to be.

[AL-HAWADITH] With regard to Amnesty International and the Human Rights Committee, does any blame fall on Bahrain, or is what's being reported contrary to the truth?

[Al Khalifah] We are for human rights, and our people are modern.

We do not apply human rights as they are being applied in Sweden and Denmark because the social conditions are different. We have read the Amnesty International book. We find that all the countries of the world are mentioned in it, foremost of which is the United States. I wish whoever talks about human rights would say the truth.

Kuwait

National Assembly Denounces Iraqi 'Provocation'

LD2411003793 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Excerpts] The National Assembly held its ordinary session this morning under the chairmanship of the speaker of the assembly Ahmad Abd al-Aziz al-Sa'dun. [passage omitted].

The joint committee, consisting of the committee for domestic affairs and defense and that of foreign affairs, held a meeting, on a decision of the National Assembly and in the presence of the first deputy prime minister, foreign minister, and defense minister. It heard a detailed explanation concerning the situation prevailing at the northern borders, and the Iraqi regime's repeated aggressions and provocations against the workers in the border trench, as well as its violation of the Security Council resolutions.

After discussing and debating the matter, the assembly issued the following statement: the National Assembly, expressing the feelings of the Kuwaiti people, has followed with great concern the aggressions and provocations of the Iraqi regime in the country's northern border region, and declares its condemnation and rejection of these repeated aggressions. At the same time, it alerts all the forces that love and support legitimacy and the principles of right and justice and urges the UN Security Council to not only exercise its prerogatives and pressure the Iraqi regime to stop these violations and provocative acts, but also stress the need for respect of the Security Council resolutions in this regard.

The National Assembly also declares that all the Kuwaiti people, with all its sections, stands as one in supporting all government efforts to maintain our terroritorial integrity. It will allow no one to trifle with Kuwait's security, safety, and sovereignty. On this occasion, the assembly expresses its full praise and appreciation for the UN Security Council's just decisions and positions and its resolutions concerning respect for Kuwait and its international border.

The session was then lifted, and the assembly will meet againt next Tuesday morning.

Military Accord With Russia To Be Signed

NC2411105993 Paris AFP in English 1020 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] Kuwait City, Nov 24 (AFP)—Kuwaiti Defence Minister 'Ali Salim al-Sabah is to sign a military pact with Russia during a five-day visit to Moscow starting Saturday [27 November], his ministry said Wednesday.

A ministry official said joint military manoeuvres would form the backbone of the defence accord, the first of its kind between Kuwait and Russia.

The signing of the pact was originally due in September but delayed because of the political showdown in Russia between parliament and President Boris Yeltsin.

Russia will become the fourth permanent member of the U.N. Security Council—after the United States, Britain and France—to conclude a defence agreement with Kuwait since the end of the Gulf war in February 1991.

Saudi Arabia

Riyadh Said Obtaining Nuclear Technology

LD2311134793 Riyadh SPA in English 1236 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Riyadh, Nov. 23, SPA—Saudi Arabia has made great steps toward obtaining the technical ability and the necessary technology to control nuclear radiation and using atomic energy for peaceful purposes like in water desalination plants, according to Dr. Salih al-'Athl, the president of the King 'Abd-al-'Aziz city for science and technology.

In an interview with the Jeddah-based 'UKAZ newspaper, published today by RIYADH DAILY, he stressed that the Kingdom should look for other sources of energy and should not depend solely on oil energy.

Dr. al-'Athl said his selection as chairman of the International Atomic Energy Agency reflected the international recognition of the high position of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the international scene.

United Arab Emirates

Papers Score Iran's Naming of Abu Musa Governor

NC2311202293 Paris AFP in English 1554 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Nov 23 (AFP)—Gulf Arab newspapers on Tuesday lashed out at Iran over its appointment of a governor for the disputed island of Abu Musa.

The UAE daily AL-KHALIJ and the Saudi AL-YAWM said Iran's move last week would escalate tension in the volatile region and further hurt its relations with the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

But the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the GCC member which claims it shares sovereignty with Iran over the island, has kept silent.

"The recent Iranian measure in appointing a governor for Abu Musa is an abortive attempt to assert its full sovereignty over the island, which it has made part of Khuzestan province," AL-KHALIJ said in one of the strongest attacks.

"Is there someone inside the Iranian regime trying to escalate the situation with GCC states?" it asked. "Or is there someone who is carrying out an international plot to keep Iran-Gulf ties tense."

The dispute over Abu Musa and nearby Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al- Sughra erupted in 1992 after the UAE, which claims the three strategic islands, accused Tehran of annexing the Arab part of Abu Musa and expelling its residents.

The two countries have shared the 25-square-kilometre (10-square- mile) Abu Musa under a British-brokered agreement signed in 1971.

Their negotiations on the dispute in September last year collapsed after Tehran refused to discuss the Tunbs. The talks had been scheduled to resume last September but were cancelled by the UAE in protest at fresh Iranian statements reasserting sovereignty over the islands.

"The irresponsible acts taken by Iran have bad repercussions on its relations with GCC countries," AL-YAWM said in an editorial. "Iran's desire to escalate the crisis completely contradicts with the peaceful efforts being exerted to find a rational solution to the problem."

The UAE has not formally commented on Tehran's move, which diplomats said was part of a shake up in Iranian provinces. They said Abu Musa had a governor before but he was removed in connection with last year's crisis.

"The appointment of a governor is part of changes in provinces conducted by the new interior minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati," one diplomat said.

AL-KHALIJ said Iran's move showed it was not interested in peace in the Gulf and indicated its turn would come after the international campaign to disarm Iraq is over.

"The recent developments showed that stability in the region does not concern Iran except that it is exploiting it in election campaigns and rivalry among political powers there," it said.

"Iran is mistaken if it thinks that silence towards the penetration of its forces into Iraq's Kurdistan and south Iraq will be met with the same silence towards its moves in the Gulf waters and islands.

"Iran, as a military power, is targeted and as a political regime and a state with ethnic minorities is targeted as well... [ellipsis as received] So what political immunity did it have in its latest behavior."

Interior ministers from Gulf Arab states on Tuesday backed the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in its dispute with Iran over three strategic islands in the Gulf.

The ministers of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) also urged the United Nations to put more pressure on Iraq to force it to implement all its resolutions.

The ministers, ending two days of cooperation talks, said the security of all the six members—Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—was "inseparable."

"On the basis of this principle, the ministers assert the UAE's sovereignty over its three islands, Abu Musa, Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra, and fully support all

its peaceful measures to regain sovereignty," they said in a statement, read by GCC Secretary General Shaykh Fahim al-Qasimi.

The statement said Kuwaiti Interior Minister Shaykh Ahmad Hamud al-Sabah briefed the ministers on Iraqi cross-border incursions into Kuwait, which was occupied by Baghdad for seven months until a U.S.- led coalition drove Iraqi troops out in February 1991.

"In this respect, the ministers stressed the importance of the adamant international position in face of the Iraqi regime, until it respects all U.N resolutions related to its aggression on Kuwait," it said.

"The ministers also urge international public opinion to put further pressure on the Iraqi regime so it will comply with those resolutions and release prisoners-of-war from Kuwait and other countries."

The statement said the ministers discussed a joint security strategy drawn up by their undersecretaries and agreed to bolster security coordination to guarantee stability in the region.

But it made no mention of plans to allow GCC citizens to enter member states on identity cards, an issue the ministers earlier said would be discussed.

Heads of the GCC states are due to hold their annual summit in Riyadh on December 20.

Naming of Governor Termed 'Escalation'

PM2311091793 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Nov 93 pp 1, 4

['Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sadiqi and Taj-al-Din 'Abd-al-Haqq report: "Emirates Rules Out Raising Appointment of Governor for Abu Musa Island With Iran"]

[Text] Abu Dhabi—United Arab Emirates [UAE] diplomatic sources have described Iran's announcement of the appointment of a governor for Abu Musa island as part of the occupation authorities' practices on the island. The sources ruled out raising this issue with Iran, pointing out that the UAE has always been against dividing the issue of Iran's occupation of its three islands: Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa, because that is bound to weaken its position in its endeavor to recover its legitimate rights on the three islands.

UAE diplomatic sources said that the decision to appoint a governor for the island is no surprise and is part of the step-by-step policy pursued by Iran to impose its sovereignty over the island as a fait accompli, contrary to the memorandum of understanding signed between the two countries in November 1971, which stipulates that the administration of the island be shared, leaving the sovereignty question unsettled.

The memorandum in question stipulates that Iranian forces be allowed limited deployment in the north of the island, while the Emirate of al-Shariqah retains all its authority over the other parts of the island and raises its flag over it. It also obliges Iran to pay 1.5 million pounds sterling annually for using the island.

The diplomatic sources noted that the decision was issued by Iranian Interior Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati, who was under secretary at the Foreign Ministry and has broad contacts with officials in the Gulf Cooperation Council states by virtue of his visits to the region's capitals.

The sources said that "a decision like that has a political meaning. Whereas Besharati was expected to use his old diplomatic contacts with the region's states to open a new page of negotiations with the UAE, we see him resorting to an escalation which could halt endeavors to resume the negotiations between the two countries, which were suspended in September last year."

Asked whether the new Iranian decision is going to speed up the UAE's move to refer the islands issue to the United Nations, the sources said that raising the issue at the United Nations is one of the proposed options, pointing out that the case was actually registered in 1971 and that the question of stepping up its discussion and referring it to the Security Council is on the cards, especially as the UAE refuses to follow any path other than peaceful means in resolving the dispute with Iran.

Asked whether the Iranian escalation is a reason to sever diplomatic relations with Iran, the sources said that the UAE's political stands and diplomatic moves are not reactions. They are measured actions within the regional and international circumstances and accord with the states' interests.

The sources added that it is not customary for the UAE to respond to an escalation with an escalation, and it will not be dragged into positions incompatible with its convictions on the need to find a peaceful way out of the crisis.

The UAE diplomatic sources expressed their belief that the new Iranian escalation will expose the the real Iranian intentions, thus prompting the upcoming Gulf summit to discuss the islands issue in detail in the light of the new developments.

Yemen

Northern Officers Said Executed for Defying Orders

PM2411111493 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Nov 93 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Reports of Execution of Four Northern Officers and Dismissal of Number of Southern Military Commanders"]

[Excerpts] Sanaa, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Press sources in Sanaa have said that military

commanders in a number of camps belonging to the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] in Lahij and Aden Governorates expressed discontent at orders recently issued them to raise combat readiness and the state of alert among the forces in anticipation of any possible military confrontation with northern forces.

There were reports recently of reinforcements to northern forces in the areas between the two former parts of Yemen. It was said that they were preparing to invade Aden, where 'Ali Salim al-Bid, deputy chairman of the Presidential Council and secretary general of the YSP, has been in seclusion since 19 August.

The reports quoted well-informed sources in Aden as saying that these commanders said the reason for their rejection of the orders is because they conflict with their belief in the need to keep the Armed Forces neutral and not to push them into the ongoing political and partisan conflicts.

The sources pointed out that the military commanders had sent a message to the YSP leadership, emphasizing the danger of using the Army in the political conflict, as this threatens unity and democracy in their country and presages a devastating civil war in which there will be no victors.

The sources said that the defense minister decided to dismiss the military commanders who rejected the orders. [passage omitted]

A high-ranking political source in Aden emphasized to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT over the telephone that four officers—whose names the source declined to reveal—have been executed in al-Hamzah camp in Ibb Governorate because of their refusal to implement orders to move their tanks toward the Qa'tabah area as part of the military reinforcements conducted in a number of camps in this area.

The source denied that the defense minister has dismissed any military commander in the present crisis for any reason. However, he said: What we are certain of is that four officers have been executed in al-Hamzah camp in Ibb, which is a northern camp. They rejected orders to move with their forces to the Qa'tabah area about five days ago, because they believed that it was a violation of the instructions of Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council and supreme commander of the Armed Forces. [passage omitted]

UN Finds 'No Evidence' of CW Use in Marshes

JN2311122993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1045 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] New York, 23 Nov (INA)—The UN Special Commission supervising the disarmament of Iraq announced today that its experts, who yesterday completed a field mission, found no evidence that the Iraqi Army used chemical weapons against the marshland population in southern Iraq.

The commission said the experts are now drafting a report making it clear that there is no evidence to suggest that chemical weapons were used.

The commission indicated, however, that the experts collected a large number of samples and that a definitive report will not be out for several months yet.

'Aziz' 'Deal' at UN To Close File on CW Issue

NC2311175793 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1450 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] While Saddam's use of chemical weapons against our kin in the marshlands continues to attract media and political attention, the head of the UN fact-finding committee on the chemical attack, who recently visited the marshes, heard eyewitness accounts, and learned firsthand of the tragic situation there, announced yesterday that his team's investigations are over, but the results will not be announced for two months.

The statement, which he made to journalists upon his return to New York, raised a host of questions as to why the results will not be announced sooner, especially now that the international team has many pieces of conclusive evidence that the terrorist regime did use chemical weapons in its large-scale attack against the (Abu-Zirqi) marshland.

Political analysts following Iraqi developments see in this step yet another sign that the United Nations is practicing double standards on Iraq. This reflects double standards by the West and the United States because the inclinations and resolutions of the United Nations and of the Security Council in particular are under the hegemony of the centers of Western political decision.

The political analysts also believe that the three countries that dominate the Security Council—the United States, France, and Britain—are not now willing to take the regime's use of chemical weapons to the Security Council table, although the UN fact-finding mission has conclusive evidence of this use. There are two reasons for this:

First, the current visit by terrorist Tariq 'Aziz to New York and his talks with the president of the Security Council and senior UN officials. 'Aziz is expected to offer to conduct a new political barter with the United States under UN cover. The deal will provide for new [Iraqi] concessions and full compliance with all Western and American conditions regarding Iraq's political future, placing Iraq under permanent American-Western political, economic, and cultural supervision. In politics, this is much worse than the notorious colonialism. In this context, the London-based AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT reported yesterday that during his visit to New York, 'Aziz will submit to the Security Council his regime's official acceptance of Resolution 715, which ensures direct U.S. interference in Iraq's affairs for an indefinite period under the pretext of imposing permanent surveillance on Iraq's military capabilities.

The price of Saddam's new concession and full relinquishment of all forms of national sovereignty will probably be the closure of the file on the use of chemical weapons and any other human rights violations the regime may perpetrate inside Iraq, especially in the south.

Second, the West and the United States are not willing to see the Islamic Iraqi opposition emerge as a primary force influencing international decision and the inclinations of the world toward the tyrant of Iraq. Western political circles preferred to postpone discussion of the regime's use of chemical weapons raised by the Islamic Iraqi opposition.

These two reasons emphasize again that the issue of change in Iraq is decided only by the will of our mujahid people, who reject every form of bargaining over their legitimate rights irrespective of the parties involved.

Tariq 'Aziz Holds Talks With Rolf Ekeus 22 Nov

JN2311131593 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz yesterday had a 105-minute meeting with Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the UN Special Commission. The meeting was held at the Iraqi ambassador's residence and was also attended by Engineer Lieutenant General 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, head of the Military Industrialization Organization; Dr. Riyad al-Qaysi, under secretary at the Foreign Ministry; and Ambassador Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's permanent UN delegate. For the Special Commission, the session was attended by its legal adviser John Scott and press spokesman Kim Trivan.

Outside the Iraqi ambassador's residence, Ambassador Ekeus said the two sides assessed the results of the technical talks and that their respective assessments were almost identical. He added that the technical talks will continue and that he believed Mr. 'Aziz will pursue the talks.

Meets French, Other UN Envoys

JN2411090193 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0815 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] United Nations, 24 Nov (INA)—Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz resumed his meetings with the envoys of the UN Security Council member states last night.

An INA correspondent in New York said that the deputy prime minister met at his place of resident with French Ambassador Jean-Bernard Merimee.

Tariq 'Aziz also met with Professor Zifferero, deputy director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The deputy prime minister met yesterday and the day before yesterday with the envoys of Britain, Pakistan, China, and Russia. He will also meet today with the ambassadors of Brazil, Spain, Venezuela, Japan, Hungary, and New Zealand.

Paper Sees Security Council Split on Embargo

JN2011151893 Baghdad INA in English 1400 GMT 20 Nov 93

[Text] Baghdad, Nov. 20, INA—AL-JUMHURIYAH daily for today has emphasised that the members of the UN Security Council realize now that the decision of maintaining the unjust blockade imposed on Iraq does not rely on any legal or technical basis.

The daily maintained that the UN Security Council members were no longer hiding their annoyance from the American-British approach and consider it strange in regard to resolutions of the council on Iraq, which is proceeding from political motives aimed at inflicting harm on the people of Iraq.

It added that the United States and Britain had created new fabrications before the latest sitting of the Security Council and made fuss about repeated and trivial matters.

AL-QADISIYAH Urges Replacing Security Council

JN2211150893 Baghdad INA in English 1310 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] Baghdad, Nov 22, INA—An Iraqi newspaper today urged world countries fighting for the future and dignity to seriously work for changing the course of action of the Security Council.

AL-QADISIYAH newspaper demanded replacing the current Security Council with another council that is more capable to reflect the will of peoples and human rights. The paper said that what is taking place in the Security Council confirmed the inability of its influential parties because they had turned it into an instrument for blackmail, oppression and sabotage instead of its duties of maintaining peace and security in the world.

The Iraqi paper pointed out that fighting, wars, chaos and disintegration which are taking place in the world were being promoted and activated by Britain and the United States. It said that those calling for carrying on embargo on Iraq were in fact increase their meddling in their brutality by continuing their disregard of the principles and norms of the international law and legitimacy and the human rights.

The Iraqi paper further asked to which limit disgrace has reached among those who had squandered their national will and independent stances and accepted to be tools in the hands of Washington and London.

The paper further said it seems that non-permanent members of the Security Council had forgotten that they belong to the Third World and their people could face a situation similar to that of Iraq.

The paper concluded by saying that the people of Iraq would continued challenging those who try to blacken the future and meaning of peoples life.

British Pilot Rescued After Crashing in North

LD2311122493 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 1217 GMT 23 Nov 93

[By Charles Miller, PRESS ASSOCIATION defense correspondent]

[Text] An RAF [Royal Air Force] pilot was dramatically rescued today in a behind-the-lines covert operation in northern Iraq after his Harrier jump-jet crashed.

The Harrier GR7 suffered mechanical failure and crashed in the mountainous Kurdish region of northern Iraq less than 100 miles from the Turkish border. The pilot, who has not been named, ejected safely and suffered only minor injuries.

American forces in the region immediately launched a covert search and rescue mission to pick up the pilot. He was successfully spotted and flown back to the British base at Incirlik in Turkey.

Editor Predicts Kuwaiti Return to 'Motherland'

JN2511161193 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 17 Nov 93 p 6

[Article by Chief Editor Salah al-Mukhtar: "Why Did We Refuse To Withdraw From Kuwait?"]

[Text] Some people are wondering why we refused to withdraw from Kuwait, and why we then withdrew after we rejected calls for withdrawal. In this episode, we will answer the first question. Next week we will answer to the second question.

If we take into consideration that the liberation of Kuwait was not merely the restoration of a natural part

of Iraq, but a basic part of a major strategic regional and international conflict that Iraq was forced into after all natural exits from the crisis were shut in its face, then we can deal with the question realistically and answer it in light of the content and objectives of the strategic conflict.

No one can deny the prominent fact that the decision to liberate Kuwait was made only after Iraq gave up every hope for a halt by the Kuwaiti rulers of the game of tightening the noose around the neck of Iraq through the destruction of its economy. By all standards, this was considered a war, as our leader, Saddam Husayn, noted in the 1990 Baghdad summit.

Therefore, the liberation of Kuwait was undertaken in light of many necessities. First, it was necessary to punish the tools of the criminal conspiracy to destroy Iraq. These tools were the rulers of Kuwait. Second, it was necessary to restore the part that had been usurped from the homeland. Third, it was necessary to keep the masterminds of this game from carrying out their game freely or from moving freely from one step to another without any obstruction, confusion, or a change in the course of events. And fourth, it was necessary to force the masterminds of the game to expose their true face and true cards so as to deny them a strategic success, should the attempts to deny them a tactical success fail.

Hence, and in order to give a scientific and correct answer to the question, we examine every aspect of the crisis to see why Iraq's refusal to withdraw before the beginning of hostilities was absolutely correct.

Iraq wanted to achieve specific and direct objectives, most important of which was to punish those who dared to become a tool of conspiracy against Iraq. Throughout their history, the rulers of Kuwait have shown a distinct mix of wickedness and cowardice. They pretend to be peaceful and willing to take offenses and they submit to the of extortion powerful parties, especially Iran and the al-Asad regime.

Therefore, Arab public opinion in general and the Iraqi public opinion in particular were surprised by the haughtiness of the rulers of Kuwait during the crisis that preceded the liberation of Kuwait. Then, having given up their assumed peacefulness, readiness to accept slaps, and submission to the extortion of powerful ones, those rulers began to address Iraq in manner that shows disrespect for a regional power that salvaged Kuwait when it faced the danger of being eliminated.

Obviously, it was the U.S. intelligence service that provoked and encouraged those rulers to follow this provocative and aggressive behavior after it gave them assurances of protection. Hence, and to maintain the state's esteem and people's dignity, it was necessary to undertake effective disciplinary measures to make those who had exceeded their limits return to their normal size and to remind those who dared to attempt to harm Iraq that Iraq's arm is long enough to maintain the state's esteem and people's dignity.

Some may ask: But is it reasonable that we punish, and then get punished by big and super powers on the pretext that we have punished? We need not answer this question; it can be answered by anyone and any social group. On the personal level, notwithstanding all basics of common sense, when an individual is insulted, he can either face the insult with anger and rejection, or with submission and resignation. In the latter case, a man would lose his esteem and he would be disgraced among his peers and termed a coward. This would open the way for more insults. An insult should be answered in kind, even if this results in losses. A man would then view himself with respect and the people around him would respect him more if he punishes those who have insulted him, even if this leads to cuts, bruises, and a torn shirt.

In our social traditions, there are high appreciations for prestigious and social values, foremost of which is safeguarding dignity and honor. Tribes here fight each other for years and scores of people are killed as a result of slanders and insults. Moreover, revenge and acts of correcting disgraceful actions, regardless of our opinion about them, are all part of social concepts that advocate that honor and dignity necessitate sacrifices and the shedding of blood.

So, if the individual defends his dignity and bleeds for its sake, and if the tribe protects its dignity and honor with piles of dead bodies and pools of blood, is it any less important when the homeland's dignity and honor are encroached upon? Does anyone expect Iraq, which is known for the courage, sacrifices, and deep roots of its people, to overlook premeditated insults by the worms and serpents of the earth only because these worms and serpents are protected by a monster that is ready to attack and destroy?

The most important pillar for any society, whether it is a tribe or a modern state, is esteem. Without this esteem, the society would turn into a cafe frequented by all kinds of people, including thieves and criminals who stain the society with their filth.

History teaches us that several wars have erupted and continued for many years, killing hundreds of thousands of people for reasons related to the humiliation of a woman, such as the war Caliph al-Mu'tasim launched for the sake of liberating an Arab woman who was captured by enemies, or the Trojan war, which broke out because Helen was kidnapped.

Based on this, the rude and provocative actions of the rulers of Kuwait against great Iraq necessitated an appropriate punitive reply to protect the Iraqi state's esteem and dignity, and to give future generations an example of their great father's concern about the name and dignity of their state and homeland, even when it necessitates great sacrifices.

The other direct objective was to revive Kuwait's Iraqi identity. This is because of Iraq's belief that this part, which was separated from the homeland, has become a serious tool of sabotage and has drained all the factors of

patience and tolerance that governed Iraq's dealing with this fabricated entity, which was established by Britain in Kuwait. This, too, made it necessary to open Kuwait's file.

Here we should pause a little to ask a question that is posed by some people: If opening Kuwait's file was necessary, then has this resulted in its liberation, or has Kuwait not turned into an American protectorate, making its liberation impossible? This question shows a shortsighted view that can only see outward appearances.

Admittedly, Iraq withdrew from Kuwait as a consequence of a balance of forces. But what happened has destroyed once and for all the spurious foundations of the so-called state of Kuwait and revealed it to the entire world as an artificial entity protected by foreign spears and without the ingredients needed for independent continuity. It is enough to hear the population of this entity after Iraq's withdrawal and read about the behavior of its rulers in order to realize that Kuwait is finished forever as a state and that it has been severed from Iraq and then afforded the protection of the force of arms.

The entire world, including Iraq's enemies, has been aware of the fact that Kuwait belongs to Iraq, that it cannot constitute a state or separate entity from Iraq, and that its rulers are little more than puppets manipulated by the United States and the Zionist movement, and so their role is no more than a colony.

A state is an entity composed of a people, territory, and sovereignty. Kuwait has no people of its own, but partly Arab settlers who hail from Iraq, Najd, and Hejaz, and the rest from Palestine, Egypt, and Syria, in addition to foreigners. All these are working in a major oil company called Kuwait. That explains why the majority of the assumed population, or people of Kuwait, left the country without defending it and then returned in a state of panic after Iraq withdrew, and left the bulk of their money deposited in foreign banks in anticipation of another flight!

Are these the people whose existence is a requirement for a modern state? Certainly not. As for the territory itself, its boundaries are ill-defined. Add to this the fact that the severe desert conditions have left the majority of the territory's population deprived of a close bond. This is especially true given that the oil wealth transferred attachment to the land to weddedness to oil. Thus the region of Kuwait became, for its rulers and the majority of its population, synonymous with its oil and dollars, and so attachment to the land was gone and the region became a hotel surrounded by a hated desert.

And finally, we come to the point of sovereignty: Is there anyone left in the world who still believes in the existence of sovereignty in the region called the state of Kuwait? Sovereignty, in the eyes of political scientists, entails the power of a ruler—a king, prince, or president—to make a free decision.

In the era before the liberation of Kuwait, there existed the form of a state that seemed to have what it takes: There was an amir, a government, a parliament, an army, a police, and a people. The international community thought that Kuwait was a small state. Now, however, it has discovered that Kuwait is just a large oil company and its rulers mere tools to carry out the dictates of the masters ensconced at the White House. So the sovereignty requirement is not there. Nor is that of the people or the territory. These requirements have been replaced by foreign military protection and power. Thus, the truth about Kuwait came out; namely, that it is a mere colony.

This truth that came to light with the liberation of Kuwait by Iraq marks a major achievement that should ensure the future liberation of the colony and its return to the motherland, Iraq. Whoever thinks that American imperialism is there to stay must be ignorant of history and the present state of affairs, including the fact that the life expectancy of U.S. imperialism is the shortest of its kind as evidenced by figures, documents, and developments, especially those that have taken place in 1993.

Regime Shells al-Basrah Area; Rebels Retaliate

NC1911164793 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 19 Nov 93

[Text] In retaliation for criminal acts by Saddam's regime against innocent people in the south of our steadfast Iraq, the mujahidin heroes shelled Saddam's Fourth Corps Headquarters in al-'Amarah Governorate. The shelling concentrated on the corps command, political guidance branch, and intelligence center.

Prior to the mujahidin's disciplinary action, the rancorous regime's artillery shelled residential quarters in (?Hiyajir), [district name indistinct], in al-Basrah Governorate, wounding many people. The regime's artillery resumed its shelling of the same area, killing many civilians, including women and children. In a subsequent bombardment of the same area at the rate of one shell per minute, families were forced to leave their homes and flee, but the regime's artillery targeted the road with a hail of shells, inflicting various injuries on women and children.

IDF To Indict Soldiers Who Refuse Pullout Order

TA2411120693 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 24 Nov 93 pp 1, 15

[Report by Arye Kiesel and Tzvi Zinger]

[Excerpt] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] top brass yesterday expressed concern over the growing call for soldiers not to participate in the pullout from Gaza and Jericho.

The concern was expressed in the wake of a letter being disseminated among Jewish settlements calling on soldiers to refuse to serve in the evacuation.

[On page 2, the newspaper prints a copy of the letter, addressed to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, in which the key words are boldfaced and underlined. The facsimile number of the Prime Minister's Office, which reportedly appears on the letter, is blacked out. The letter says: "I, the undersigned, pronounce that I will refuse to uproot Jewish settlements and expel their inhabitants from Judaea, Samaria, Gaza, the Jordan Rift Valley, and the Golan Heights because it is a criminal action that is clearly illegal." At the bottom of the letter there is room for the soldier's name, address, and signature.]

A public storm was also set off by the publication of a letter by Major (reserves) Tzvi Tirngal—the commander of the transportation platoon that will be the first to participate in the pullout—who asked to be relieved of duty.

Liaison officers in reserve units—especially logistics and transportation units—were instructed in the past few days to immediately report to the generals in charge of the various commands every instance in which a soldier refuses to serve in the pullback.

It has been learned that the Army plans to press charges against the first soldiers who refuse orders and publicize the verdicts so that others will learn a lesson. This was also the IDF's policy when soldiers refused to serve in the territories at the outset of the intifadah. [passage omitted]

Poll: Most To Obey Withdrawal Orders

TA2411120293 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 24 Nov 93

[Public opinion poll carried out by the Dahaf Institute headed by Mina Zemah]

[Text] Question: Reserve soldier, if within the framework of your military service, you receive an order to participate in the evacuation of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] camps in the Gaza and Jericho areas, how will

Carry it out without reservation	80 percent
Ask to be relieved, but will obey the order	13 percent
Refuse to obey the order	6 percent
No response	1 percent

The poll, conducted on 22 and 23 November, encompassed 396 respondents, who constitute a representative sample of all the soldiers in the reserves. The margin of error is 2 to 4 percent.

White House: Syria To Return to Talks in Jan

TA2411110793 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 24 Nov 93 p 3

[Report by Amnon Barzilay]

[Excerpt] Syria will return to the negotiating table with Israel in early January, White House officials reported to the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem yesterday.

The report is based on talks held this week between the U.S. Administration and the Syrian Government. According to the report, Syria is not presenting any preconditions for resuming the talks, but has received assurances that the United States will be a more active partner in behind-the-scenes deliberations.

Reports reaching Jerusalem show that political activity in the region will increase in the weeks leading up to the arrival of Secretary of State Warren Christopher on 5 December. Christopher will set up his headquarters in Israel, from here go on to other states in the region, and return to Israel on 9 December to continue the talks.

Other senior political sources in Jerusalem expressed reservations about the White House reports. In their view, "a great deal depends on Christopher's visit to the region."

The sources added that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin expects Christopher to assist Israel in advancing the understandings reached with Jordan. They said they do not rule out Syria returning to the negotiating table, but in their view, an official announcement on that will be issued only toward the end of Christopher's tour of the region in order to provide the secretary with a political coup upon returning to Washington and to strengthen his commitment to al-Asad to advance Syria's interests.

Israeli and Jordanian delegations will meet in Washington next week for another day of deliberations on their joint economic problems. They will discuss customs, currency, and banking, as well as other issues.

Political sources in Jerusalem said yesterday that Christopher might extend his stay in the region in order to assist the Palestinians and Israel in resolving problems that may crop up in the critical stages prior to 13 December, the date on which the agreement on the establishment of self-government in the Gaza Strip and Jericho will be signed, according to the Declaration of Principles.

Syria decided to join the peace talks in Washington after it learned that Israel is firm in its opposition to the Syrian demand to agree to a Golan Heights withdrawal before Syria makes known its policy on the substance of the peace. Political sources said that Israel is insisting on opening a secret negotiating track with Syria.

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad asked to put off his decision on the continuation of the talks until he sees whether Israel and the Palestinians manage to implement their Declaration of Principles agreement. After being updated by Jordan's King Husayn and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, al-Asad understood that despite the difficulties in the negotiations, the two sides will reach an agreement by mid-December.

That accord, which will bring about a speedy withdrawal of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] from Gaza and Jericho to new deployment lines, constitutes a far-reaching political change. The entry of thousands of Palestinian policemen into the self-rule area could enhance the status of PLO head Yasir 'Arafat in the territories, as well as that of the Israeli Government, which might lead King Husayn to make political decisions which will bring his country closer to a peace treaty with Israel. That would be a new situation which would call for Syria to prepare politically, which is the reason behind the decision to agree to resume the talks in January. [passage omitted]

Foreign Ministry Officials on Talks With Syria

TA2411081493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Interview with Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir by Dani Gur-Arye; in Tel Aviv on 23 November—recorded]

[Text] [Gur-Arye] According to foreign reports, an agreement between Israel and Syria is imminent. Is this true?

[Savir] No, there is no imminent agreement between the Syrians and us. I think we are still expecting a more thorough Syrian definition of their own view and their own self-interest as far as peace is concerned. We are ready to talk with the Syrians any time, at every possible channel of negotiations. So, Secretary of State Christopher will be in the region in the beginning of December, and it will be the continuation of the process that has never really stopped with Syria, but I cannot say that such an agreement is imminent.

[Gur-Arye] What concrete results do you expect to come out of the secretary's visit?

[Savir] I think a renewal of the dialogue with Syria, in one form or another. I think with Jordan we are further ahead. We will continue to have economic talks with Jordan. We have to solve some of many issues, both political and economic, with the Jordanians, and the road will be free, I think, to relationships that—if it will not have the signature of peace—they will have the contents of cooperation. And, I think by the time the secretary is here, we will have made further progress in the Taba-Cairo-al-'Arish talks on Gaza and Jericho, and a new agreement will be imminent.

[Gur-Arye] Is it more convenient for Israel to have the Syrian talks on a back burner for now, at least until the spring?

[Savir] We are ready to talk openly at a back channel. It is not a question of convenience. It is a question of effectiveness. As we have not really made too much progress in an open channel, maybe a back, more discreet, channel would be a possibility—the Syrians can choose the channel. But, what they have to make clear publicly is their full intention to move ahead toward a full fledged peace with Israel, with all the ingredients of peace, not only as a price it should pay to Israel. It is a Syrian self-interest and we would like to hear it loud and clear from the Syrians. The rest can be worked out in open, or private, channels.

[The same English newscast adds: "Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin says the policy of the government in territorial compromise on the Golan Heights, the meaning of which is a partial withdrawal, including the continuation of Israeli settlements. He was speaking last night in the Knesset."]

U.S.-French Balance Impacting on Peace Process

TA2211154193 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 22 Nov 93 p 9

[Commentary by Pinhas Inbari: "An Old Formula or a New Deal"]

[Text] Judging by some reports, Prime Minister Rabin returned from his U.S. trip with an awareness that the resumption of talks with Syria must not be postponed any longer, and that they should be held either right after or in parallel with the Jordanian talks. Yet on the eve of his return, the prime minister made remarks incompatible with the above. Rabin said he was willing to agree to the Lebanese Army experimentally deploying in south Lebanon and if the Lebanese Army does indeed disarm Hizballah, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will return to the international border after the Lebanese Government guarantees that Israel's allies in the security zone will be unharmed.

This is a revival of the "Jazzin First" formula that Israel and the United States proposed to the Lebanese in the course of Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz' visit to New York on the occasion of the UN General Assembly sessions.

It would seem that Rabin was suggesting that Lebanon renounce the Syrian auspices and bravely resolve to join the peace talks on an independent basis. But if his most recent proposal is the result of talks with Buwayz in New York, it would mean that a new move, which should be given some thought, is in the works.

Contrary to the implications of Rabin's remarks, it is not inconceivable that Israel should offer Syria a deal whereby it would acknowledge Syria's special status in Lebanon in exchange for Syrian recognition of the special relations between Israel, the Palestinians, and Jordan.

One of the early signs of such a development was inherent in French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe's tour of Syria and Jordan. France has compelling reasons to want to foil such a move. Juppe's trip was supposedly launched on behalf of Foreign Minister Peres in a bid to soften the stand of Damascus. At the same time, he kept his country's interests in mind, since France would do nothing to promote such as deal. Paris might perceive any Middle East division into subdistricts as a promotion of the U.S. economic interests and of its efforts to gather Middle East markets under the umbrella of NAFTA, rather than that of the EC.

France and the United States have long engaged in a quiet competition in Lebanon. While it is public knowledge that France's standing is based on the Maronite Christians, it is less known that Washington exerts its influence in that country through...Syria.

Paris and Washington openly disagree on the issue of the Syrian Army's status in Lebanon. While the French have been demanding total withdrawal from Lebanon by all alien armies, including that of Syria, the Americans, who support the al-Ta'if agreement, have been asserting that the Syrian Army is legitimately deployed in Lebanon. The Syrian Army's role in curbing the PLO's power in Lebanon and obstructing its rehabilitation after the Lebanese War can be better understood against this background. These disagreements have influenced other matters, such as the attitude to the PLO. While France has been a consistent champion of the PLO throughout the years, the United States has sided with the Palestinian leadership in the territories.

Therefore, a final U.S. recognition of Syria's status in Lebanon will finally remove the pro-French/European Lebanese from the centers of power in Beirut—which will have an effect on the European-American deployment in their competition over the international markets. This is why, during his talks in Damascus, Juppe brought up policies corresponding with French interests. He reiterated the French stand that, eventually, the Syrian Army will have to pull out of Lebanon in order to ensure its full independence. It is very probable that he also warned that if Syria does strike such a deal with the Americans, France would enhance an international public opinion protest against "the occupation of Lebanon." Instead, he urged al-Asad to make the bold move of launching direct contacts with Israel, regardless of other issues.

In an attempt to prevent Israeli pressure regarding relations with Lebanon, Juppe suggested that al-Asad does not stop Jordan, and allowed King Husayn to sign the declaration of principles that was agreed upon in the famous secret meeting in an Amman suburb.

Husayn was scheduled to travel to Damascus immediately after the elections last week, but this was delayed and he left only yesterday. Last week the king spoke with President al-Asad over the phone. It stands to reason that al-Asad is not very happy. If Husayn indeed supports the new parameters of the political agreement with Syria, then Syria is asked to forsake not only the Golan Heights, but also its status as a pan-Arab superpower in control of Lebanon, the Palestinian problem, and Jordan. In return for a recognition of its status in Lebanon, it will be asked to forego its ambition to dictate Palestinian and Jordanian policies.

Husayn will ask al-Asad for a green light to complete the move with Israel and sign the agreement. The fact that al-Asad is approached in this manner flatters Syria, but al-Asad must take into account that this might be the last time Husayn will ask for his approval on anything. This green light might turn into an eternal carte blanche.

Syria has so far opposed the establishment of a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation. On two occasions in the past, it moved its troops up to the Jordanian border in order to frustrate the special ties between Jordan and the Palestinians. Syria failed to foil the move, and is now being asked to give its blessing to it, in return for recognition of its special status in Lebanon.

The test case for the chances of an agreement between Israel and Syria has so far been the Golan issue. The fact is, however, that Syria's attitude on the Golan has always been very pragmatic. Al-Asad is not sentimental with regard to the Golan, nor does he cultivate a Syrian longing for a pillaged part of the land. He treats the issue as a lawyer would while defending his client's rights to a piece of real estate property. This is not to say that he would be willing to hand the Golan over to Israel, but that he would be willing to make wide-ranging security arrangements in return for an Israeli recognition of his sovereignty over the Golan. The real concession he will be making will not be the security arrangements with Israel. It will rather be his foregoing of the notion of Syria as a regional superpower with ambitions to determine Jordanian and Palestinian policies.

New Anti-al-Asad Radio Begins Broadcasts

TA2411114393 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 24 Nov 93 p 2

[Report by Pinhas 'Inbari]

[Text] A new radio station, called The Voice of Arab Syria, began broadcasting a few days ago, devoting itself to attacks on President al-Asad. The station does not say where it is located, but based on the content of its broadcasts it might be based in Iraq.

Yesterday the station warned al-Asad against signing an agreement on the Golan Heights with Israel and attacked his alliance with Iran against Iraq.

The Voice of Palestine broadcast was on the same wavelength several days ago. It issued announcements by Fatah, especially groups opposed to the agreements with Israel.

Kuwaiti Interview of Weizman Bypasses Arab Boycott

TA2111080593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 21 Nov 93

[Text] President 'Ezer Weizman has granted an unprecedented interview with a Kuwaiti newspaper. The pro-government daily AL-SIYASAH sent an Egyptian reporter to Israel to speak to the president and published the interview yesterday. The paper was the first Arab publication to send a staffer for such an assignment, violating the Arab boycott of Israel. In the interview, President Weizman said Israel would like to see Syrian President al-Asad in the country soon in the pursuit of peace. He said he hoped all Arab leaders would follow in the footsteps of the late Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat, whom, he said, was certain that the Arabs would be in the end inclined towards peace.

Six-Month State of Emergency in Territories Proposed

NC2111141593 Paris AFP in English 1226 GMT 21 Nov 93

[Text] Jerusalem, Nov 21 (AFP)—An Israeli government commission has proposed that the state of emergency in the occupied territories should only be extended for six months rather than one year, a justice ministry spokeswoman said Sunday [21 November].

Since Israel seized the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights in 1967, parliament has voted each year to extend emergency laws in force in the occupied territories by another year.

Spokeswoman Ilana Levian told AFP the inter-ministerial commission had decided to extend the state of emergency by only six months from January 1, 1994, "because one has to take account of the legal changes which will come about notably in the Gaza Strip and Jericho in the West Bank."

Under the terms of the Israeli-PLO accord signed September 13 limited Palestinian self-rule will start in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, with an Israeli military withdrawal beginning December 13 and elections to an interim Palestinian authority before July 13, 1994.

Justice Minister David Liba'i will present a draft law on the proposed six-month extension to the government Monday, which will later be put to the parliament.

Emergency laws enable the Israeli military authorities to rule by decrees, 3,000 of which have been issued since 1967.

Mobile Home Residents Offered Cheap Housing

TA2111133793 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 21 Nov 93 pp 44, 45

[Report by Nirit Zakh]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] "Time is pressing and the construction and housing minister has vowed to evacuate the mobile homes sites," a senior ministry official disclosed. "The minister is committed to his promise, but everything is being done in haste, and the new immigrants are now being directed beyond the Green Line. The purpose is to show that the mobile homes sites are being evacuated, and it does not matter how."

A bus rented by the Construction and Housing Ministry visited the mobile homes at Be'erotayim in the Hefer Valley about a week ago. The local sales agent led a group of Ethiopian immigrants to the Ma'ale Efrayim settlement in order to show them the empty apartments. The immigrants were told that a three-room apartment, which recently cost some 140,000 shekels, will now cost them only about 70,000 shekels (about $23,000). [passage omitted]

Some 400 families live at Be'erotayim, while only 70 have signed contracts to purchase apartments. "At this rate, the housing minister believes that the residents of the site will be evacuated in another four years. That is why he is pressing to have them transferred to another site any way possible, the official said.

HADASHOT asked Arye Mizrahi, director general of the Construction and Housing Ministry, if he could explain the evacuation of the inhabitants of the mobile homes beyond the Green Line?

"The minister has said that his ministry is not preventing anyone from purchasing an apartment in Judaea and Samaria at normal prices, without mortgages or benefits. The minister decided in July to set up a team—called Future and Home—with responsibility for evacuating the mobile homes. The team operates at 14 sites around the country, especially problematic ones. We are dealing with some 6,700 families, of which 1,600 have already bought apartments."

Mizrahi denied what Ministry of Construction and Housing officials are saying in the field, that residents of the mobile homes who are being transferred beyond the Green Line are being offered very cheap mortgages. But he confirmed that ministry policy permits the purchase of apartments in the West Bank. [passage omitted]

ADP Gives Rabin Deadline on Coalition Inclusion

TA2311072893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Knesset Member 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah said that the prime minister has to decide by Friday [26 November] whether he wants Darawshah's Arab Democratic Party [ADP] to join the coalition; otherwise, it will join the opposition. Darawshah told Qol Yisra'el his party is tired of being treated like an apprentice. He warned that if the ADP joins the opposition, it will vote against the government on no-confidence motions on poverty and other social issues.

Jewish Activist Describes Anti-Arab Operations

TA2311162993 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Nov 93 p B2

[Interview with "a veteran member" of the Committee for Security on the Roads affiliated with Kakh, "who wished to remain anonymous" by Nadav Shragay; place and date not given]

[Text] [Committee member] Recently there have been two waves of serious operations. The first was after the murder of Rabbi Druckman's driver Efrayim Ayubi, and the second after the ax attack on Efrayim Zarbiv near the Cave of the Patriarchs. After Ayubi's murder, we used our loudspeaker system in Qiryat Arba' to ask committee members to gather near the southern gate. About 60 people showed up in about 15 cars. We had planned the action in advance. We split into groups, and each group was assigned an area. We carried our personal weapons, crowbars to break down doors and window bars, stones, and tanks with fuel."

[Shragay] What exactly did you do with these things?

[Committee member] After the Ayubi murder, but primarily after the event with Zarbiv, we used mainly stones. We have a simple method which has proven itself: We drive with our high beams on, and that blinds oncoming drivers. The drivers are confused and slow down, and then one of two things happens: They either have an accident, or we wait till they drive next to us, and then we throw a stone at their window. If he does not get hurt from the stone, he will get hurt in an accident. Last week we were aided by the heavy fog in the Hebron area. The blinding tactic, coupled with the stone, exacted a heavy price from the Arab population. There were at least six accidents that I know of in the Bayt Kahil junction. In one of the cases, an Arab car crashed into a police van. There were casualties in some of the accidents.

[Shragay] Were firearms used?

[Committee member] Not as a rule. We use knives to cut tires. We cut at least two tires, to prevent them from using their spare. We use crowbars to break padlocks on doors and window bars. The Arabs began to put metal bars around their solar receptors on the roofs, but we can overcome that with crowbars. We hurl stones at house window panes and vehicles. Last summer, we set sheaves of hay on fire and sprayed vineyards in the Halhul area with toxic substances. After the Ayubi murder, we uprooted two dunam of vineyards near the murder site and set 15 cars on fire belonging to Arabs. We also went to a building site bear Hebron. We destroyed as much as we could there. There was a huge crane there. We dismantled every part we could and poured sand into the engine. That crane will not work in the near future.

[Shragay] What happens to those who resist you?

[Committee member] We focus on damage to property. Locals who resist us get a beating, as happened in the Hebron market where we have a routine. We turn over as many stands as we can after each event. Some stand owners tried to resist. They got beaten.

[Shragay] How do you explain the fact that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has been unable to pick up your people?

[Committee member] What rules the territory is either the Arab knife, rifle, or ax, or the Jewish stone. The IDF has assumed the role of the United Nations, the observer. For our part, we try hard to avoid confrontation with the Army. The moment our job is done, we clear out. By the time the IDF arrives, we are usually far away. Last time was an exception. A brigade commander managed to capture a stone thrower who was acting on our behalf. His friends noticed it, and one of them—who was about 10 meters away—fired in the air. The shot confused the brigade commander, who let go of the prisoner, and everyone ran away. All in all, the IDF is rather clumsy, compared to us, compared with past activities of the intifadah children.

[Shragay] Were any attempts made to confiscate your firearms?

[Committee member] Attempts were made to confiscate weapons from our activists and from Qiryat Arba' residents who are not our activists. Those who insist on retaining their arms, however, can do so.

[Shragay] Are there any people who stockpile weapons?

[Committee member] I have no knowledge of this, but I assume that this is the case. The IDF does not intend to deploy units beyond well-defined security zones and the Jewish settlements. We, on the other hand, intend to concentrate our operations within Arab population centers and to travel on roads which the IDF does not intend to secure. It goes without saying that firearms are necessary for self-defense in such places and situations.

[Shragay] What about the Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza police force which Kakh established a year ago?

[Committee member] This police force today has a cadre of 1,500 men, 500 of whom are abroad—where they also received most of their training. All of them are equipped with personal firearms only. The job of this police force

will be to secure Jewish movement wherever the IDF will not do so. As far as I know, the members of this force will not wear uniforms and will be an integral part of the Jewish population, but will act whenever necessary.

[Shragay] How many people does the Committee for Security on the Roads include?

[Committee member] Approximately 600 people. The committee is active in the areas of Hebron, Ari'el, Yitzhar, Bet El, Shilo, and 'Imanu'el. We have activists in almost every settlement. There are approximately 140 settlements, and in order to carry out our simple and unsophisticated operations we do not need more than three or four activists in every point. This minimal manpower is always at our disposal.

[Shragay] Is there any connection between the Qiryat Arba' municipality, the "local action committee" and yourselves?

[Committee member] They are familiar with our operations, because we keep them briefed. Barukh Marzel, the first chairman of the Committee for Security on the Roads, is today a member of the Qiryat Arba' council, and this is instructive. We also coordinate our activities with the local action committee, which unofficially responds to terror attacks in the field on behalf of the council.

[Shragay] Do you consult with rabbis before your operations?

[Committee member] We hold consultations, not necessarily before our operations, with rabbis both from Qiryat Arba' and the ultra-orthodox sector—I will not give you any names.

[Shragay] The committee launched its operation by escorting buses and private vehicles. Is it still carrying out this activity?

[Committee member] This activity goes on. We travel on the buses and escort them with our private cars. A driver whose bus was stoned must stop. If he does not stop the passengers force him to do so. We get out, break [shovrim], uproot ['oqrim], and apprehend the stone throwers. I personally apprehended three Arab stone throwers. We forced them onto the bus, made them lie under the benches, and stepped on them. When we reached Qiryat Arba' one of the soldiers, a resident of the town, took them to the Military Government building. Some drivers who refused to stop received special treatment. People from Qiryat Arba' organized and repeatedly wrote the Egged Bus Company letters of complaint which had nothing to do with security, rather with politeness and propriety. Two weeks later Egged replaced these drivers with local drivers from Qiryat Arba'.

Palestinian Killed After Refusing To Halt

TA2311191593 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] This evening, the security forces fatally shot a Palestinian resident of the Gaza Strip after he refused to halt at an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] roadblock near al-Shaja'iyah. Our correspondent Shlomo Eldar was told that the security forces opened fire strictly in accordance with the IDF arrest procedures.

Chinese Officials Killed in Helicopter Crash

TA2411145093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] The signing of economic agreements between Israel and Shenyang in Manchuria was canceled due to the helicopter crash this morning which resulted in the death of two leading members of the Chinese delegation. The other 25 delegation members will leave Israel tomorrow and return to their country.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has sent letters of condolences to the Chinese premier, to Shenyang, and to the families of the deceased.

The city of Ramat Gan has also sent its condolences. The mayor of Shenyang who was killed in the accident had visited Ramat Gan to sign a twin city pact.

Peres Leaves for Athens To Begin European Tour

TA2311110593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres left for Athens, the first stop on a week-long European tour. PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat arrives in Athens tomorrow, but Greek, Israeli, and Palestinian sources say no meeting has been planned between the two. Minister Peres will also visit the Netherlands and Belgium and will pay the first visit of its kind to Albania.

Minister Comments on Cooperation With Turkey

TA1911201793 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1800 GMT 19 Nov 93

[Report by Andac Atak in Jerusalem]

[Text] Shim'on Shetrit, Israeli economic and planning minister, has declared that the common strategic interests shared by Turkey and Israel will ensure the implementation of bilateral cooperation. Shetrit held a news conference for a group of Turkish television reporters in Jerusalem.

According to information supplied by Shetrit in his news conference, Israel hopes that the Middle East peace process will mark the beginning of a regional economic cooperation to include Turkey as well. He believes that

Turkey can play an important role in this regional cooperation with its economic potential as well as its water resources.

Shetrit noted that the cooperation between Turkey and Israel both on a bilateral level and on the basis of individual companies will create a great potential which will benefit the two countries.

Israel claims that it has reached an advanced level in agricultural industry and certain high-technology machinery, but attaches great importance to the experience and successes of Turkish construction firms in the international arena. Israel announces that even if a comprehensive peace agreement is signed in the Middle East, it will not introduce significant cuts in its defense expenditures. Shetrit explains: A strong and first-rate defense is necessary to protect the peace.

First Cypriot Ambassador Presents Credentials

TA2411120993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Excerpts] Cyprus today raised its relations with Israel to an ambassadorial level. The new Cypriot ambassador presented his credentials to President 'Ezer Weizman this morning. [passage omitted]

Israel has always had an ambassador in Cyprus, but the Cypriots had kept their relations with Israel at a lower level, until today. The new ambassador, Andreas Pirishis, will be nonresident. [passage omitted]

Polish Chief of Staff Wilecki Begins Visit

TA2211115393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] Polish Chief of Staff Tadeusz Wilecki has arrived for a visit as the guest of Lieutenant General Ehud Baraq, to reciprocate the latter's visit to Poland.

Baraq, Wilecki Visit Holocaust Memorial

TA2311095193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] The chief of staff has said that, at present, there is no force in the Middle East capable of endangering our existence. He stressed that the struggle against terrorism is tough, but it does not threaten the state's existence.

Our correspondent Arye Schorr reports that Lieutenant General Ehud Baraq made the remarks after visiting the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial with Gen. Tadeusz Wilecki, his Polish counterpart.

Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that following the visit to Yad Vashem, the guest presented Baraq with an old rifle found in the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto after World War II. Gen. Baraq said that the rifle is a symbolic expression of the fighting spirit of the Jewish youth during the Holocaust and that the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] fortitude comes from that spirit. Gen. Baraq gave the rifle to the Yad Vashem Authority.

Ratification of Israel-U.S. Taxation Treaty Delayed

TA2111114493 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 21 Nov 93 p 5

[Report by Natan Gutman in Washington]

[Text] Approval of the treaty to prevent dual taxation between Israel and the United States was put off at the last minute because of new demands by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service [IRS].

The treaty was to determine how people who divide their time and business affairs between the two states pay their taxes and to prevent dual taxation, which puts businessmen off from investing in Israel. The deliberations between Israel and the United States on a treaty to abolish dual taxation have been going on for 30 years, and significant progress has been made in the past five years. The Senate was to have ratified the agreement this month, but the IRS prevented the agreement from being approved.

The IRS is now insisting that the two countries share information on those liable for taxation. Israel agreed to an exchange of information, but the IRS has now brought up new demands, which in Israel's view, cannot be implemented both for practical and legal reasons.

Sources in Washington said that Israel will now try to convince the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is supposed to present the agreement for ratification, that contrary to the IRS's stand, the convention will not harm the United States.

King Husayn Addresses New Parliament 23 Nov

JN2311115393 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1010 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Speech from the throne by King Husayn, at the inauguration of the first ordinary session of the 12th Jordanian parliament in Amman—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Blessings and peace be on the faithful Hashemite Arab prophet.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: In the name of the Almighty God, and with His guidance and succor, I open the first session of the 12th Jordanian parliament. I praise the Almighty for bestowing on us the capacity to unify our ranks, to strengthen our brotherhood, to engage in consensual cooperation and solidarity, and to protect our deep-rooted national unity within the framework of our democratic march, our political life which is based on the rule of law, and our policy which is founded on the Constitution, on the National Charter, and on respect for human rights, freedom, and dignity.

I wish to congratulate you on earning the honor of serving this beloved country as well as our Arab and Islamic nation, to which Jordan is proud to belong and whose rights and causes we are proud to defend.

We have commanded that elections be held at their appointed time under the aegis of political pluralism stemming from this country's soil and character and closely linked with its distinguished, genuine march despite the rapid and sudden changes and developments that have taken place in our region.

With great ability and efficiency my government was able to provide the wherewithal for the success of parliamentary elections in a democratic climate of freedom and fairness, with the participation of all citizens regardless of their roots or origins. Every citizen has enjoyed total freedom with regard to running for elections or exercising the right to vote. The amendment to the electoral law, which gave one vote to each voter, came only after a thorough dialogue by politicians, intellectuals, members of the media, and representatives of all shades of party and political opinion in this beloved country—a dialogue derived from the letter and spirit of the constitution and the national charter, ensuring equality in rights and obligations for the entire citizenry.

The fairness of the elections, and everyone's cooperation to make them a success, have reflected a high level of awareness by members of our one family, the close bonds that tie them together whatever their origins, their courage in rising to a difficult task, their participation in shouldering responsibility, and their equality in rights and obligations.

In equal measure, these elections have demonstrated the impartiality of my government and its eagerness to provide a climate of freedom, equality, and universal representation in the interest of electoral equity to which we have all aspired. Thanks to the almighty, the testimony of all, far and near, has been that the elections were totally honest, straightforward, all-embracing, fair, just [applause] and indicative of our national unity to which we all adhere, whose depth and foundations we cherish and whose goals and aims we hold in great pride. Deputies assembled here are a true embodiment of the credibility and objective nature of these elections. I am fully confident that you are well placed to live up to the task entrusted to you, to cooperate on all that is right and good, to serve the country and enhance its stature, and to share in shouldering responsibility and in making decisions which place the higher national good above any other considerations or interests.

You are, with God's grace, the elite whom the one family has chosen and in whom it has placed its trust. Let us be deserving of this trust, as a united family governed by amity, joint responsibility, cooperation. I am sure, ladies and gentlemen, that you will find, as you represent the legislative power of this 12th parliament, that Jordan's democratic drive has taken great strides towards strengthening the foundations of democracy as reflected in freedom under the law; elected parliamentary representation; separation among multiple constitutional authorities; answerability of the executive branch to the legislative branch; independence of the judiciary, which answers only to the law; political party pluralism; human rights; and autonomy of elected local government.

These are all principles guaranteed by the Constitution, and we should therefore strive to make of our democratic system a model acceptable to our nation and regarded by it as a source of inspiration. This is a sacred trust and responsibility by which you should be guided every time you make a decision on any course of action and on every occasion calling for an honorable stand in the service of the country's higher interest.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: Your present assembly coincides with an international political, economic, and strategic phase which has, over the last few years, seen increasingly rapid changes posing major challenges at the Arab, regional, and international levels. Our country has been able to stand firm in facing these challenges and to persist in making determined, confident, and steadfast progress.

The issue of peace has entered a new stage requiring us to take a strong stand stemming from our national unity, from our constant positions rooted in international legitimacy, and from our unwavering determination to achieve a just, durable, and honorable peace which future generations would accept and preserve. Such a peace would be based on the restoration of all our rights, would guarantee the legitimate rights of our fraternal Palestinian people on their national soil, and would provide security and peace to all the states and peoples of the region. To this end, we gave our support to the position taken by the Palestinian people as represented

by the PLO. We provided an umbrella ensuring legitimacy for their negotiating team, in a spirit of truthfulness, brotherhood, and sincere openness that must prevail among brethren, and the need to support the PLO in realizing its national identity.

The PLO, in full freedom and by its own free choice, has adopted an independent position, thus bearing its historic responsibility. It concluded a Declaration of Principles with Israel on 13 September 1993; and Israel recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. Israel also recognized the unity of the Palestinian people within and outside the occupied territories. The independent Palestinian will has thus been confirmed. This recognition has been supported by the great world powers, and, indeed, by most world states. Furthermore, the PLO recognized the State of Israel. Old enemies shook hands. Pursuant to our commitment to respect and support the independent Palestinian decisionmaking since the Rabat summit of 1974, we support the PLO and respect its right to work to realize the goals of the fraternal Palestinian people as well as those of their central and basic cause. We shall do everything in our power to extend this support. To epitomize this conviction, my government persistently instructed the Jordanian negotiating team to bide its time, waiting for progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track. Hence, as soon as the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles was signed, with all that this development entailed, my government instructed the head of our negotiating team to sign the Jordanian-Israeli negotiations agenda on 14 September 1993, thus heralding the start of efforts to proceed toward peace in foolproof and wise steps, confident of the ability of our government, your august assembly, and our courageous people to cooperate among themselves so that they may face the challenges of the next phase and its responsibilities with faith, loyalty, and determination.

This would lead us to the dawning of peace, the peace of which the peoples of the whole region have so far been deprived. Such peace would bring forth satisfaction and stability, open wide horizons for the progress and advancement of humanity, and provide man with the opportunities for a decent life, thus eliminating all differences among all parties.

I am fully confident and I have absolute faith that we all believe that a just and comprehensive peace will not be realized and completed until Jerusalem becomes the city of peace, its symbol and its essence, once its occupied Arab land is returned to its owners who have inherited it from their Arab forefathers, Muslims and Christians alike, once it becomes the meeting point between the Palestinians and Israelis, and once it becomes a meeting point of peace for all.

Our commitment to the achievement of peace is a duty we owe to future generations. And this commitment prompts us to adopt an honest and sincere stance that wants Jerusalem to be the eternal symbol of peace in the world among the followers of the three monotheistic religions, all of whom are descendants of Prophet Abraham, may God's peace be upon him.

As for Jerusalem, the holiest of holies, it lies in the hearts and souls of all believers in God, followers of the three monotheistic faiths. We will recognize no sovereignty over it except for that of Almighty God, glory to Him. [applause] From this august rostrum, I would like to renew the call I made in my address to the nation on 12 October for the creation of a grand non-political Arab-Islamic body that would unite Muslims, bring them together, and represent the seven Muslim sects, one that would rise above the mundane and trivial. Such a body would be assigned the task of caring for and overseeing Islamic holy places. We would like to affirm that we will support such a body with all the means and resources at our disposal. Moreover, we will not cede or give up our religious and historical responsibilities toward Jerusalem and toward al-Awqaf and Islamic holy places in Palestine. At the same time, we call for the start of an inter-religious dialogue among the followers of the three monotheistic religions to realize God's will, which ordained that holy Jerusalem be the closest to their hearts, so that they may worship Almighty God, compete to show fear of Him, and gain his satisfaction, glory to God.

Stemming from the legitimacy of our historical and religious responsibilities and from our keen determination to protect and preserve our holy places, we are continuing restoration and renovation work on the Dome of the Rock, as well as capping it with gold-enameled copper plates. I thank Almighty God who has allowed me to do this, serving the cause of the first of the two Qiblas and the third holy mosque. The restoration committee is currently engaged in reconstructing the pulpit of the holy al-Aqsa Mosque, under my direct supervision, and in the wake of the message I addressed to my government in this regard. This is being done so the pulpit of the prophet and the forerunners will once again play its historic role in guiding the believers.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: Our country's peace and stability, as well as the protection of its independence and accomplishments, the freedom of our citizens, their human dignity, their personal and public safety, and the preservation of national peace and security, are an indivisible whole. They are protected and secured by the vanguard of our people, members of our Arab legion, the Jordanian Armed Forces [applause], the ground, air, and naval forces, by members of our public security, general intelligence, and civil defense bodies, through their keen national awareness and integrated work, they truly represent our country's shield, impregnable fortress, and the source of its pride and admiration. I would like to take this auspicious opportunity to convey to them, from this rostrum, our greetings and appreciation, for they are our nation's knights and true and honorable men, who are loyal to their homeland and nation. They are also the guardians of the principles of the Great Arab Revolt, whose banner they, with God's help, shall forever hold high [applause]. My government

will persist in its commitment to the obligation of providing them with our full support and watchful care to ensure their development and upgrading, thus enabling them to continue their distinctive task of protecting our homeland, safeguarding the security of our citizens, and carrying out their humanitarian world mission as part of the international peacekeeping forces.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: Ever since free Jordanians joined the ranks of the knights the Great Arab Revolt under the revolutionary Hashemite al-Husayn Bin-'Ali, God rest his soul [applause], through the time loyal Jordanians declared allegiance to his son, martyr 'Abdallah Bin-al-Husayn, and up to the period of my assumption of constitutional powers, this Arab sanctuary has been seeking to achieve full Arab solidarity. We were a founding member of the Arab League and have, since its inception, striven to support its work and institutions. Forty-eight years into its existence, it is high time that an effort is made to amend its charter, in line with contemporary needs. This is necessary to achieve a greater measure of cooperation, coordination, and integration among all fraternal Arab states, in a bid to restore to the Arab nation its rightful position which is commensurate with its history and noble message, and to overcome its current weakness brought about by differences and disputes.

My government will continue with all means at its disposal, to strengthen cooperation with all fraternal Islamic states, especially in defense of the reputation, essence, truth, and humane and compassionate principles of Islam.

With regard to our relations with friendly states, my government will continue to maintain and strengthen them on a basis of mutual confidence and respect, reciprocity, common interests, and non-interference in internal affairs. My government will give special attention to matters pertaining to the United Nations and to regional and international organizations, as well as to enhancing its role in these organizations and seeking to update their legislations, reorganize their structures, and revise their charters.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: As we strive to establish a secure modern state founded on principles of right, justice, equality, and equal opportunities for all, it is imperative that we focus our efforts on constructing a model state and enhancing the concept of the state of law, which alone can safeguard human rights and ensure the citizens' security, well-being, stability, and faith in the future. To uphold this concept, my government has established a cabinet portfolio for legal affairs, as a means of stressing respect for and supremacy of the law as a way of life. This new organ will pursue a course of upgrading legislation, in full cooperation with your august assembly, of strengthening ties between the legislative and executive branches of government, follow-up of parliamentary matters and of addressing common concerns in conformity with the greater national interest. The government has made major strides in this respect. Since assuming its responsibilities, it has seen to the enactment of legislation pertaining to the structure and administration of a number of ministries and organizations, including, among others, the statute on cabinet prerogatives and the reorganization and administration of the Prime Ministry and the Ministry of Health.

The government has also established several committees composed of distinguished specialists in their fields to draw up draft legislation on matters closely affecting citizens interests. Upgraded legislation will contribute to a more rapid resolution of court cases, enhanced performance in the judicial domain, and to facilitating procedures.

In a similar vein, the government continues to pursue its policy of supporting the independence of the judiciary, guaranteeing its impartiality, upgrading its performance and appointing qualified and distinguished judges. The government has begun to open new courthouses in various regions of the kingdom and to construct the necessary buildings to house them.

In response to our directive to upgrade our diplomatic institutions and enable them to carry out their mission of strengthening Jordan's ties with other countries and reflecting the true face of Jordan, my government has drawn up a special by-law for the diplomatic corps as well as a by-law organizing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and regulating its work in a manner that will enhance performance and improve living conditions for staff in our diplomatic missions to enable them to play their role and carry out their duties efficiently and with dignity.

My government has begun to apply the concept of administrative and financial decentralization. This involves an activation of the role of governors, executive bodies and local councils in the various governorates. Some of the prerogatives of ministers have been delegated to governors and to executive and consultative councils, in pursuance of the principles of freedom, participation in the decisionmaking process, sharing of responsibility, serving the people, giving them the chance to participate in administering their local affairs, and moving the decisionmaking process to where the citizens are. Decentralization would thus meet the objective of enhancing the democratic way of life.

In pursuing the participatory principle, my government is determined, beginning this year, to transform the budget into a working document that will give direction. It will no longer be a budget merely concerned with ministers, departments, or projects but one that encompasses the various governorates and reflects current and capital expenditures in each governorate. My government is also preparing legislation to regulate local administration and local government.

As with previous governments, my government will continue its efforts to develop and upgrade the administrative system, in the interest of greater efficiency. The

administrative system will be run by the most qualified personnel who are capable of transcending red tape, nepotism and individualism, thus serving all citizens without ulterior motive or discrimination. To ensure effective operation of the administrative system, it must be guided and supervised. To this end, the Bureau of Control and Administrative Inspection has begun its work, now that necessary legislation has been completed for this purpose. Its work will be additional to the control exercised by the Audit Bureau over state revenues, expenditures and methods of disbursement.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: Our constant belief in freedom of thought, speech, and participation—as guaranteed by the Constitution and the law and exercised in a climate of responsibility—has provided the means for an active intellectual, cultural, literary, and youth movement, as shown in the overall cultural renaissance pervading the country. Popular, fine, and theater arts have flourished. Seminars, lectures, and cultural fora have mushroomed in every region.

The print media have been increasingly active. New daily newspapers and weekly magazines have been published under the new Press and Publications Law for 1993, which guarantees the freedom of press, publication and opinion to all Jordanians. Most newspapers have adhered to the legal framework and have responsibly observed the freedom provided therein.

The Ministry of Information has launched a new information strategy for Jordan, by means of which official bodies and their means of communication and operation will be modernized to enable them to cope with rapid changes on the Arab and international scenes. Now that Jordan's satellite television has commenced broadcasting to the Arab world, work is continuing apace to extend its transmission to Europe and America. It will be a vehicle reflecting Jordan's bright picture abroad.

My government has drawn up an integrated plan to develop the posts and communications sector and extend its services to all regions of the Kingdom. This will be done through an investment program aimed at upgrading satellite communications and adding new national and international exchanges and telephone networks.

In the realm of education, my government will continue to implement the educational development plan launched six years ago, with emphasis on the active role of education in the process of democratic change. There will be a clear focus on quality, including: Upgrading the teaching profession in terms of performance and status; developing curricula and school textbooks in content and layout; providing a variety of new educational facilities; relinquishing rented school buildings; improving the level of educational administration; developing evaluation methods and general examinations; and emphasizing the role of the school as a unit of educational development and an active component of the local community.

My government will reinforce the role of private sector education and will provide all necessary means to enable it to carry out its role to the fullest degree and to contribute to all areas of education.

My government will pay due attention to special education geared toward people with special needs and toward the handicapped. This includes an activation of preschool education; an expansion of adult education opportunities; and the dissemination and diversification of vocational training opportunities. It will also seek closer links between educational output and educational cycles on the one hand and development and labor requirements on the other.

At the level of university education, my government has launched a comprehensive review of regulations and procedures at state and private universities with a view to introducing a set of changes and amendments in a manner that will reinforce the independence of the universities; that will be commensurate with scientific, social, and democratic growth in Jordanian society; and that will improve conditions for university personnel to increase their capacity to serve the academic process. My government pays particular attention to al-Bayt University to enable it to realize its Arab and Islamic objectives.

Sports and youth activities in the Kingdom have shown great vigor. Clubs have participated in elections for membership in the administrative councils of Olympic athletic associations. A number of sports complexes have been constructed in various regions of the Kingdom. My government has established the Jordanian center for trainers as an investment in a national training capacity and a means of enhancing athletic performance all over the Kingdom. It has also taken the initiative in utilizing the capabilities of our youth and giving them a meaningful direction through the Higher Committee for Voluntary Work. It has established four youth camps, in addition to the youth hostel in al-'Aqabah.

Honorable senators, Honorable deputies: Complementing past efforts, my government has persisted in construction and development efforts at all levels aimed at achieving an advanced state of economic growth and social and cultural development. The five-year plan for economic and social development for 1993-1997 has been ratified. The plan is rooted in an economic policy that seeks to activate the role of the private sector while upgrading the performance of the public sector. It is derived from a comprehensive view of economic and social realities. It strives to enhance sustainable development while taking into consideration the economic restructuring program for 1992-1998 in order to achieve domestic and external balance in our national economy.

Integrated packages of economic and social policies have been adopted. They provide the private sector with a sufficient range of opportunities and accord it priority in the investment and production effort. My government has also continued its efforts to combat unemployment and poverty. To this end, it has launched a number of

projects to alleviate this problem and raise income levels. Among these projects is one aimed at diversifying sources of income for needy families. Others have the objective of supporting the Development and Employment Fund, the National Assistance Fund, and the Zakat Fund and its committees. My government will give due attention to citizens with special needs of all kinds, through providing work opportunities for the handicapped as stipulated by the Law on Care for the Disabled. Special employment offices will also be established to serve this group.

My government will also strive to enhance the role of the voluntary social sector and expand the base of citizens' participation in areas affecting their own lives and communities through the establishment of new cooperative and charitable societies. My government has also completed the establishment of the information center for the social development sector, which will help activate and upgrade the performance of social assistance organizations in the public and private sectors.

At the financial and monetary levels, my government has persisted in its efforts to bring about greater self-reliance while preserving financial and monetary stability and reducing the burden of the external debt. Initial indicators show that the national economy has achieved positive results, for the second year running, in conformity with the economic restructuring program. It is expected that the gross domestic and gross national products will achieve real growth of about 6 percent as a result of growth in the various production sectors, especially construction, agriculture and tourism. It is also expected that inflation will be held to the existing level of under 4.5 percent.

The government has made a strenuous effort to reduce the burden of the external debt through the debt restructuring process. Agreement has been reached in principle with the London Club, which represents commercial creditor banks, on the restructuring of debts amounting to U.S. $895 million. My government will sign the final agreement on the restructuring of those debts and debt interest before the end of the year.

My government has been able to secure the agreement of creditor governments—members of the Paris club—to extend the restructuring period on debts amounting to U.S. $250 million, representing installments and interest due in the period from 1 July, 1993 to 28 February, 1994.

We have also succeeded in reducing the budget deficit and controlling expenditures for the current year. Domestic revenues, again for the second year running in the Kingdom's history, have covered total operating expenditures as well as a large part of investment expenditures.

Financial accomplishments have not been divorced from monetary stability. The monetary authorities have succeeded in replenishing the Kingdom's foreign currency reserves, while ensuring stability in the exchange rate for the Jordan dinar. Credit facilities extended by banks and specialized credit agencies to the various production and service sectors have been carefully attuned to planned growth policies. In the field of financial legislation, my government is conducting a review of legislation pertaining to customs as well as taxes on consumption income, property, free zones, and the Amman financial market with a view to keeping abreast of developments in those areas. At the level of industrial investment, my government has sought to provide facilities, within available means, to create a stable investment climate. This has enabled the registration of more than 843 industrial projects, which provided 11,200 new job opportunities, in addition to a rise in the number of local companies registered, which amounted to 4,017 companies during this year. A department for the encouragement of investment has been set up to serve as reference point enabling investors to implement projects without difficulty. Appropriate measures have been taken to expand vocational and industrial estates. My government has reviewed a number of economic and commercial agreements existing between Jordan and Arab and foreign countries with a view to raising the level of trade exchange and enhancing domestic exports to their markets.

My government has demonstrated its interest in the private sector through supporting private initiatives and participating in the decision-making process out of a conviction that the private sector plays an important role in economic and social growth.

Pursuant to our belief in the twin roles of political and economic democracy, together with the principle of sharing in the decision-making process, my government has paid due attention to restructuring the economic consultative council and expanding its base through adding men of distinction to its membership. The council has been invited to regular meetings to devise common solutions to basic economic issues, including investment legislation, economic and monetary policies, prices and wage policies, privatization, and the contribution of the public and private sectors to economic activities.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: My government has continued oil and gas explorations in al-Rishah and the Dead Sea regions. It has expanded the capacity of al-Rishah gas-operated power station. A first well is currently being drilled to the north of al-Rishah. Measures are being taken to establish a national oil and gas company.

In the field of mineral resources, work continues on the technical surveys necessary for prospecting for mineral resources in the various regions of the Kingdom. Positive results have been achieved through the discovery of promising new ores. Work also continues on expanding and developing renewable energy resources, including wind energy, solar energy, and oil shale.

In the agricultural field, the government is continuing its drive to reclaim new lands in elevated areas and plant them with fruit trees, to complete national reforestation projects, to develop the Hammad region, and to provide capital and operating loans to farmers.

An agreement has recently been signed pertaining to the income diversification project in cooperation with the International Agricultural Development Fund. Another agreement is in the process of being concluded with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development to finance projects serving small scale farmers.

In the area of labor, vocational training, and social security, my government strives to provide a favorable climate for work and productive endeavors as well as for vocational safety, social security for the worker and his family, and the means of enhancing professional and productive skills, through training and rehabilitation programs.

My government is persisting in constitutional and legal efforts to enact a new labor law that will improve employment conditions, address issues pertaining to working women, and ensure greater benefits for the labor force.

My government has established the mechanisms and procedures needed to regulate the employment of guest workers, coupled with constraints on their competition with the domestic work force. It continues to lend its support to labor and employers unions so as to strengthen the three elements of production in an integrated manner that will serve the national production. My government has completed the blueprints for a labor-employment organization, which will be brought into existence in due course. It has also completed a draft law to regulate vocational work through vocational classification and stratification.

My government continues to support the Vocational Training Institute with a view to upgrading the quality of trainers and enhancing the institute's capacity, enabling it to accommodate 72,000 trainees over the years of the 1993-1997 Five Year Plan. My government is also continuing in its oversight of the Social Security Institute with regard to the provision of social security benefits, support of the national economy, and protection and enhancement of the real value of its assets in order to enable it to meet its commitments to subscribers.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: My government has sought to expand the health insurance umbrella. To this end, it will be enacting legislation to bring all citizens into the health insurance scheme. It also seeks to disseminate preventive health care and to draw up regulations aimed at strengthening health supervision. At the level of curative medicine, work is afoot to raise the absorptive capacity of government hospitals through: Increasing the number of beds in most hospitals of the kingdom; establishing new hospitals, most important of which will be the King 'Abdallah Hospital, al-Karak Hospital, Yajuz, and Dayr Abi Sa'id; and activating the role of health centers. The government will also support the private health sector, enabling this sector to do its part alongside the public health sector.

My government is also about to complete a draft law on the environment to regulate cooperation among the parties concerned with environmental preservation and protection from pollution. The law will lead to the establishment of a public environmental institution that enjoys financial independence and has a higher council that would include representatives from the public and private sectors and semiofficial, nongovernmental and voluntary societies. These will be given an active role in policymaking and the implementation of environmental projects. Jordan has continued its distinctive role at the international level to protect the environment, through active participation in conferences and seminars as well as through implementing provisions of international conventions on the environment that Jordan has had a hand in drawing up or has formally signed.

In the interest of providing food security, my government has continued to ensure regular strategic food reserves, which would meet the Kingdom's needs for a period of six months. It has also preserved the stability of prices for basic food items within the limits of the subsidy earmarked for this purpose, which includes support for domestic agricultural production. My government will continue to provide basic foodstuffs at acceptable prices while seeking to ensure that support reaches those who actually need it, in an effort to achieve both justice and economic reform.

In the area of drinking water, my government has continued to establish principal and secondary water networks serving the new population centers while, at the same time, upgrading existing networks to ensure better water distribution. The proportion of the population served by public water networks has now reached 98 percent of the Jordanian people.

In the irrigation sector, my government will proceed to implement a comprehensive development plan for the remaining parts of the Jordan Valley. The implementation of this ambitious plan will commence next year and will serve to develop the Wadi 'Arabah region, similar to what was achieved in the Jordan Valley and southern al-Ghawr, to turn them into productive and population-attracting areas.

As for dams, work will commence before the end of the year on the construction of a number of large dams in areas showing promise along the valleys leading to the al-Ghawr regions. Implementation of the catchment and desert dam program will continue, with the participation of the Jordanian Armed Forces, in order to contribute to the development of the bedouin regions.

In the area of housing, my government is doing its part in helping to secure appropriate dwellings and provide urbanized services to low-income families.

My government is also engaged in the establishment, development and maintenance of the public roads network. It continues to provide the network with all necessary traffic amenities and to build new roads. It will also continue to support the construction sector.

In the field of transport, my government has begun to take the necessary steps to ensure a unified system of oversight for the transport sector. It will provide incentives for the private sector to invest in the administration and ownership of the transport sector. It has drawn up draft legislation to set up a higher transport council and affiliated sector committees to assist in setting public policy for the coming phase. It has also begun the process of establishing an information center to serve the needs of the transport sector. It has taken the necessary measures to restructure Royal Jordanian to enable it to forge ahead with its national responsibilities.

My government pays great attention to archaeological sites and historical buildings, particularly since they are a national treasure and a cultural heritage of which we are proud, not to mention the fact that they are tourist attractions for domestic and foreign tourists. It also seeks to develop tourist facilities, extending both infrastructure and superstructure support to tourist development areas in various regions and places; to diversify the services of tourist facilities; and to rehabilitate these facilities so they may receive tourists and guests from Jordan and abroad. This should increase economic returns in a manner that would support the balance of payments, replenish the treasury's hard currency reserves, augment the economic growth rate, and expand the gross national product. The private sector will have a major role to play in the tourist development endeavor through incentives aimed at expanding investment, streamlined procedures, tourist development legislation, as well as marketing and promotion drives in international tourist markets.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: Our faith in the unity of this nation and in the future of its generations requires us to seek to revive mutual confidence among Arab brethren, to transcend the obstacles and shortcomings which have beset the course of Arab solidarity, to renounce division and disagreement, and to reinstate amity and mutual understanding. Factors for Arab agreement far outstrip those of estrangement and division. In all that pertains to Arab action, we should proceed from the concept of our overall pan-Arab security, interrelated interests, and common future in the interest of finding a comprehensive solution to the various strategic problems which we face.

The current phase requires further efforts toward a high degree of coordination. It requires a unified and coordinated position on the issue of peace, which would lead to the restoration of the just Palestinian and Arab rights. God stands witness to our true intentions. Jordan will persist in its strenuous efforts to strengthen ties with Islamic states, enhance cooperation with them, and show the bright humanistic face of our noble religion, its compassionate principles, and enlightened open-mindedness.

Jordan will strengthen its relationship with the world states. In this regard, my government has established diplomatic ties with the Islamic Asian republics that have recently won their independence, as well as Eritrea, and South Africa. It has also contributed humanitarian aid to brothers in Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: Our country's blessed march requires each and every sincere effort, persistent hard work, and fruitful cooperation among the members of our close-knit family, be they officials or private citizens. May God help you accomplish the demanding tasks ahead. May he grant you success and guide your steps along the path of goodness and righteousness.

May God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you. [applause]

King's Speech 'Guide for National Action'

JN2411114493 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 24 Nov 93 p 1

[Editorial: "The Speech From the Throne"]

[Text] The speech from the throne with which His Majesty King Husayn inaugurated the first session of the 12th Parliament was tantamount to a guide for national action during the next stage of our continuous march. The speech was truly a record of great accomplishments achieved in the previous stage.

Perhaps the most important thing King Husayn expressed pride over while inaugurating Parliament was what was embodied by the recent general elections and the fairness, justice, and straightforwardness which characterized these elections, and to which everyone inside and outside Jordan stands witness. This brightened the image of our country in the eyes of sons, brothers, and friends.

While inaugurating this Parliament's session, King Husayn did not forget to diagnose, very accurately and clearly, the main elements of the current stage in the life of our country, our nation, and our joint pan-Arab interests. His majesty also did not forget to review the main developments, all of which constitute the challenges facing the nation on the regional and international levels.

Since achieving a just and comprehensive peace is one of the most important challenges at this stage, King Husayn chose to recall all the main steps which led to the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles followed by the signing of the Jordanian- Israeli agenda for negotiations, thus launching a move toward peace with firm and wise steps.

King Husayn did not hesitate to reiterate that the desired just and comprehensive peace will not be achieved or completed until Jerusalem becomes the city of peace and a point of meeting between the Palestinians and Israelis and among all the faithful followers of the three divine religions. This requires a dialogue on the future of holy Jerusalem and making sovereignty over it belong to God alone.

While continuing its work to achieve Arab solidarity and to establish the best relations with friendly states, Jordan is persistently continuing to build a modern and fortified state based on right, justice, equality, and equal opportunities among all citizens, whatever their origin. It is doing so by building the model homeland and crystallizing the concept of law.

Hence, His Majesty King Husayn summarized the main duties of this stage by stressing the need to continue internal development and activate individual potentials. This should be followed by a revival of mutual trust among Arab brothers, action to achieve peace through an effective and coordinated Arab stand, exertion of sincere efforts with Islamic countries to portray the real bright image of Islam, and reinforcement of our relations with friendly countries. This will require every sincere effort, persistent action, and full cooperation among the people of our one family—officials and citizens—on various levels of responsibility.

King: Next Phase 'Jordanian, Pan-Arab'

PM2311161293 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Nov 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "King Husayn Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Features of Next Stage in Jordan Are Arab, Jordanian, Pan-Arab"]

[Excerpt] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—King Husayn of Jordan yesterday described his meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad as very important, encouraging, and reassuring.

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT he said that he will visit Cairo soon and meet with President Husni Mubarak in order to coordinate the Arab position on the peace process.

King Husayn's statement came during a ceremony marking the laying of the foundation stone of the Interior Ministry building in Amman yesterday. He added that the features of the next stage in Jordan are Arab, Jordanian, and pan-Arab, because they take account of responsibility to posterity.

The Jordanian monarch emphasized the need to continue the dialogue and coordination with the Arab brothers over developments in the region, including the peace process.

Answering a question put to him by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, King Husayn said: We are for a comprehensive and just peace in the region—a peace that safeguards the legitimate rights of all peoples in the region and is acceptable to posterity after us.

Meanwhile, an authoritative source in Amman has emphasized that Jordan will not sign a separate peace treaty with Israel without progress on the other Arab tracks. [passage omitted]

King Leaves on 'Short Visit' to Egypt

JN2411113793 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] Within the framework of His Majesty King Husayn's consultation and coordination with his brothers the leaders of fraternal Arab countries, and proceeding from his majesty's eagerness to reinforce mutual trust among Arab brothers, his majesty today left Amman for Cairo on a short visit to Egypt. During the visit, he will meet with his brother His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak to discuss various Arab, regional, and international issues of mutual interest as well as bilateral relations.

Seeing his majesty off were His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, a number of their highnesses the princes; their excellencies the Senate president and the speaker of the House of Representatives; his majesty the king's advisers; the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff; his majesty the king's private secretary; the minister of information; ranking officials at the Royal Hashemite Court; and a number of ranking civilian and military officials.

Accompanying his majesty during his visit is an official delegation including His Highness Prince Talal Bin-Muhammad, his majesty's military secretary; Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, the prime minister; His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; and Marwan al-Qasim, his majesty the king's political adviser.

His majesty was also seen off by the Egyptian ambassador in Amman.

Tahir al-Masri Elected House Speaker

JN2311161493 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] The 12th House of Representatives today held the first session of its ordinary term under Shaykh 'Abd-al-Baqi Jammu, the eldest House member. Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali and the ministers attended.

At the outset of the session, the royal decree calling on the Parliament to convene an ordinary term was read out. A letter from the prime minister announcing the names of winners of the parliamentary elections in various constituencies in the kingdom was then read out.

Members of the House of the Representatives then took the constitutional oath.

Later, a ballot was conducted to elect a speaker for the House of Representatives. Deputy Tahir al-Masri [a former prime minister and independent member of the House for Amman's Third District] won the elections with a majority of 57 votes to 22 votes that went to his rival, Deputy 'Abdallah al-'Akayilah [Islamic Action Front member, representing al-Tafilah constituency]. One member abstained from voting.

To Lead Parliament on 'Right Track'

JN2411111493 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Nov 93 p 4

[Editorial: "Hope and Light From Under the Dome"]

[Text] The opening of the 12th Parliament yesterday is one further step in Jordan's march towards the establishment of a democratic and modern state building on the country's achievements during the past four decades. The new full House, the Lower and the Upper, with 80 new members, ushers in a new breed of mostly young politicians who are expected to enliven the country's political and social debate. Notwithstanding the change that characterises the composition of the new Lower House as a consequence of the introduction of the one-person, one-vote election formula, the new deputies are more representative of the grassroots aspirations of the people. While those deputies are expected to busy themselves with the concerns of their constituencies, they have the constitutional mandate to legislate while at the same time watching the performance of the government. These are certainly not the easiest of tasks. The government has already committed itself to a comprehensive programme of political, economic, social and administrative reforms. It therefore becomes imperative that the deputies make it their main mission to exhort the government to adhere to its commitments as detailed yesterday in His Majesty the King's speech from the Throne.

Jordan's commitment, as now been repeatedly stated by His Majesty King Husayn, to a just, durable and honourable peace, places further challenges on the deputies. The task the government has been entrusted with, continuation action of peace talks with Israel, is indeed a formidable one. While the peace that will emerge from the current talks might not be to the liking of some, it will nevertheless put the country face to face with new challenges that are different from past one. These challenges require the strengthening of democracy and the reform of government.

Issues like the future of Jordanian-Palestinian relations, ties with other Arab states and the new world order will certainly figure high on the agenda of the 12th Parliament. Judging from the performance of the Lower House during its first session, the next four years will hopefully be productive ones. The election of former minister Tahir al-Masri to head the House in its first year is a good omen. Through his background, immense experience and liberal leanings, Mr. al-Masri is expected to lead the House on the right track.

Terms Parliament 'More Mature'

JN2311212393 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 23 Nov 93

[From the "News at Ten"]

[Text] The Lower House of Parliament elected former Prime Minister Tahir al-Masri as speaker. Mr. al-Masri, a second time MP [member of parliament] from Amman's Third District, won 57 votes, while his challenger, al-Tafilah MP 'Abdallah al-'Akayilah received 22 votes. Only one of the 80 deputies abstained.

Mr. al-Masri took over from al-Shaykh 'Abd-al-Baqi Jammu, who according to bylaws took the chair as the eldest of the deputies. The new speaker shook hands with Dr. al-'Akayilah after the vote and addressed the House, thanking its trust and urged its members to draw lessons from past experiences and move forward with Jordan's democracy.

In an interview with Jordan Television, Mr. al-Masri said he expects the new parliament to be more mature, balanced, and objective. Alma Barghuth, from the French News "Le Journal" asked the speaker on whether his election would affect his position as a deputy.

[Begin recording] [Al-Masri] It will affect it probably in a positive manner because being the speaker will enable me to work for the whole country. Anyway, the deputy when he is elected he is a member of parliament not only representing his district, but representing all of Jordan. So, the speaker will be working on very wide basis and taking interest and working towards matters that concern all Jordan and policy in Jordan. That will not lead me to ignore or to not utilize my efforts towards serving my constituents.

[Barghuth] The points of comparison and the points of difference that you see between the previous parliament and today's new parliament—the good and the bad?

[Al-Masri] Well, I think everybody should learn from his mistakes, individuals and institutions. I keep saying that we should not repeat the experiment of the four years that have passed. We have to build on it. We have to look at the positive side of it and carry on, and we have to avoid the negative factors and negative effects. So, I think that this parliament will be a more mature, more balanced parliament and it will have more independence than before. It is more objective, it will be more objective in its evaluation of the matters. Its relation with the government will be based on more clear bases than in the past. But, still, I think the previous parliament has done a lot of good things, and it has established the parliament as a powerful institution and a democratic institution, and I think this is a plus for the previous parliament. [end recording]

The Lower House later elected former minister and Irbid mayor, 'Abd-al-Razzaq Tubayshat as the speaker's first deputy. Mr. Tubayshat won 44 votes while his opponent, Hashim al-Dabbas, received 35. 'Abd Musa al-Nahar was elected second deputy by acclamation.

IAF Deputies Urge Probe of Election Proceedings

JN2211092493 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 22 Nov 93 pp 24, 21

[Text] In a statement yesterday, the parliamentary bloc of the Islamic Action Front [IAF] has criticized the government's measures before and during the elections.

The IAF deputies urged the House of Representatives to assume its responsibilities by examining the contestations lodged with it and showing a high degree of responsibility and integrity. The IAF deputies also asked the House to form a parliamentary fact-finding committee to examine the election proceedings and discover the truth.

They also asked the House to reject the provisional election law that was behind many negative phenomena that harmed our national unity. They further asked the House to issue an election law that ensures justice, integrity, and sound procedures.

The IAF deputies urged the House to take the government to account, given that it is responsible for these practices in light of the facts that the House will discover.

Statement Alleges Government Election 'Rigging'

JN2411140193 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Nov 93 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—A group of 50 political activists, Parliament members and candidates in the 12th parliamentary elections Tuesday circulated a statement protesting against what they alleged unfair and non-free parliamentary elections held on Nov. 8, demanding that those responsible be held accountable for their actions.

The statement, bearing the 50 signatures, accused the present government of taking certain measures in order to consolidate its hold over the Lower House of Parliament and pave the way for the implementation of policies which, they said, ran in harmony with the U.S.-Israeli plans related to the Arab-Zionist conflict and in conformity with the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The signatories, the majority of who affiliated to the Islamic Action Front (IAF), the Jordanian Community Party, the Jordanian Democratic People's Unity Party, the Jordan Socialists Arab Ba'th Party, the Jordan Democratic Peoples Party (Hashd) and the Jordan Democratic Arab Party, accused the government of going back on the march towards Democracy by undertaking certain negative measures.

Following the dissolution of the 11th Parliament without any legal justifications, the one-person, one-vote election system was introduced, the statement said. This undemocratic system, which aims at achieving certain objectives, led to the dismemberment of the Jordanian society and caused rifts within the people's unity, giving cause to the reemergence of sectarian and factional jingoism and creating dangerous situations, alleged the statement.

Furthermore, the government, and in a move reminiscent of the martial law mandate, resorted to transferring employees from their places of living and work, barred candidates from exercising their legal rights of conducting election campaigns and exploited the official media and security services which exercised pressure on the public in a bid to influence their voting trends. Finally, the government resorted to open rigging of the election results, the statement said.

We have hundreds of pieces of documented evidence that expose the manipulaton and violation of laws which occurred during the last elections and which clearly expose the fact that the elections were neither free nor fair or democratic in any form, continued the statement.

This fact, the statement added, is now known to the people from al-Ramtha, in the north, to al-'Aqabah, in the south.

In order to place all the facts before the public, said the statement, the signatories will soon publish what they claim to be the complete file of rigging and forging that have occurred.

It said that the political parties and various personalities representing the different ideologies in the country preserve their political and legal right to pursue efforts in scrutinising the violations that were committed against the Jordanian people, including the resort to the judiciary.

The statment said that the signatories were demanding the following:

— The creation of a trusted parliamentary committee to conduct investigations into the election process. The committee should have access to various districts to hear the views of different people protesting and contesting the elections results. This committee should publish its neutral findings and conclusions, make recommendations to the present Parliament and eventually remove all traces of the illegal practices.

— Holding the government which supervised the elections responsible for its behaviour since it was to be considered responsible for all the violations and excesses.

— The cancellation of the temporary Elections Law and organising free, fair and democratic elections to be based on the strength of a new democratic law that would be in harmony and in conformity with the Jordanian society and its interests. Elections should be

held under the supervision of the judiciary authority and not the Interior Ministry.

Furthermore, the statement appealed to the Jordanian people to join forces and stand firm against deals with the Zionist enemy, in view of the serious dangers facing our national and sacred causes in the wake of the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli agenda.

It also appealed to the people to defend democracy and freedom, to join forces with the national Jordanian parties and opposition groups and support their aforementioned demands so that they can ensure the return of political stability to the country and overcome the results of the elections results with united ranks so that national unity can be further enhanced.

It said that the struggle must continue to ensure freedom, citizens' dignity, improve people's standard of living and defend the Arab identity of Palestine and Jerusalem and fully restore the Palestinian people's historic rights.

It said that this course of action is needed in order to confront the dangers of normalising Arab relations with Israel and other colonial plans in the Arab region on the economic, cultural and social plans.

The statement said that the signatories would continue to hold meetings in order to safeguard the national objectives and the nation's dignity.

Council of Ministers Endorses 1994 Budget

JN2411110293 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Nov 93 pp 1,3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[Excerpt] Amman—The Council of Ministers Tuesday approved a nearly JD [Jordanian dinars) 1.5 billion budget for fiscal year 1994 envisaging a repeat performance of domestic revenues covering not only current expenditures but also part of capital expenditures, officials said.

The Cabinet, meeting shortly before His Majesty King Husayn opened the 12th Parliament, reviewed the budget and endorsed it unanimously ahead of presenting it to the legislature for approval next month, the officials said.

No details were avaialble, but one official said the budget figures "represented a continuation of Jordan's success in addressing not only all current expenditures but also part of capital expenditures as the case is for the year 1993."

Fiscal 1992 was the first time in Jordan's history that domestic revenues covered current expenditures and part of capital expenditures.

Figures released by the Central Bank of Jordan for the first six months of 1993 showed that the budget was performing well in terms of expected local revues and current expenditures.

Total domestic revenues until June 30 were JD584 million in addition to JD33 million in external aid and JD21 million in repaid loans, while current expenditures amounted to JD512 million and capital expenditures were about JD101 million.

The 1994 budget reflects an overall increase of over JD200 million from the JD1.28 billion budget for 1993, but no figure was available on the actual deficit before financing.

The official, who declined to be identified, said the deficit was "definitely more than the eight per cent before financing for the year 1993" as a result of higher allocations for infrastructure spending and services.

Noted economist and columnist Fahd al-Fanik said the external aid to Jordan was "nominal" during the current fiscal year, but projections for 1994 were higher.

As such, he said, external aid should be able to cover the deficit.

The reduction in the overall deficit from up to 25 per cent of the gross domestic product in the late 1980s is noted by internaitonal economic experts as a major achievement for Jordan, given the severe economic blow it suffered and continues to suffer as direct and indirect results of the 1990-91 Gulf crisis triggered by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

"It was considered almost impossible for a country with features that are unique for Jordan to have recovered from the problems it faced in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis," said a senior World Bank expert.

By and large, the expert said, Jordan's adherence to the economic restructuring programme agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Kingdom's self-adjustment could be equally, could credit for the country's economic recovery. [sentence as published]

"There is a growing sense of self-reliance and the need to raise optimum results from the resources available rather than looking for international assistance," said the expert. "This is what we are always looking for in countries that face problems similar to that of Jordan."

Finance Minister Sami Qammuh was quoted as saying by Reuters: "I am optimistic that early next year the economic outlook will be brighter with the direction towards peace picking up regionally and concrete economic agreements being implemented." [passage omitted]

Talks With Israel Under Way on Airspace Issues

JN2411104993 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Nov 93 p 3

[By a JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—Jordanian and Israeli aviation authorities have reviewed the use of each other's airspace as part of a broader accord on regional cooperation in the field, but such discussions have not entered a stage of any agreement senior official sources said Tuesday.

The sources rejected Israeli reports that the two sides had reached an accord and said any comprehensive agreement on cooperation on civil aviation affairs would have to await a formal peace treaty.

"There were some preliminary discussions, but we are far from reaching some of the core issues, let alone nearing any agreement," said a senior official who spoke on condition of anonymity. "There are a host of political issues that need to be sorted out before we get into the nitty-gritty details of an aviation accord."

Under international civil aviation charters, no country can deny the use of its airspace to another unless the countries involved are in a state of war or under a stage of national emergency.

Jordan and Israel, although engaged in peace talks since October 1991, are technically still in a state of war. Furthermore, Arab League resolutions and the Arab boycott of Israel prevent any Arab country from allowing Israeli use of its airspace.

"Any decision to allow Israel to use Jordanian airspace has to come as part of a broader Arab decision to lift the ban on allowing Israel to use Arab airspace," said another official. "It is not a simple decision between Jordan and Israel."

The official, who also preferred anonymity, pointed out however, that technically there is no Arab decision against using Israeli airspace and as such there is nothing to stop Jordan from doing so if the Kingdom chooses.

"But I will not describe Jordan as too anxious to jump at such a decision," the official added.

According to Israeli reports, the Jewish state is ready to allow Royal Jordanian, the Kingdom's national carrier, to use Israeli airspace even without a simultaneous Jordanian agreement to allow EL AL, the Israeli airline, to overfly Jordan.

Jordanian officials saw the reports as a sign of Israel's anxiety to bring about as much normality as possible to its relations with Arab states even before comprehensive peace agreements are signed. They said it was similar to the Israeli move to unilaterally open telephone links with Arab countries despite opposition from the Arabs.

The officials conceded that using Israeli airspace for west-bound RJ planes could cut an average of 40 minutes of flight time, which means savings in fuel and other related costs.

On the other hand, Israel could cut considerable flight time for its eastward planes if they were allowed to use Jordanian airspace, as well as the airspace of the some of the Gulf states.

"Now the Israeli planes have to go up all the way to Turkey and cross into Central Asian airspace and come down to their destinations in India, China and Japan," said one of the officials.

The officials also dismissed as unfounded an Israeli claim that El Al had already signed an "agency agreement" with Jordanian travel agent(s) for the flights the airline purportedly plans to operate to Jordan.

"From what we understand, there were some agents who have a chance to meet with some El Al officials, and the next they themselves heard was the report of an agreement which they knew nothing about," said the official.

Protocols With Russia Signed; Shumeyko Departs

JN2311202693 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Excerpts] His Highness Crown Prince Hasan today gave Vladimir Shumeyko, Russia's first deputy prime minister, a letter from His Majesty King Husayn for Russian President Boris Yeltsin. The letter was delivered at the conclusion of the first Jordanian-Russian executive meeting. Further details on this meeting with our correspondent Yusuf Faraj.

[Begin Faraj recording] The first Jordanian-Russian executive meeting resulted in the signing of six protocols by the two parties. These are: The arbitration protocol, the banks protocol, the businessmen protocol, the employers protocol, the science and technology protocol, and a protocol for cooperation between the Jordanian Exports and Trade Centers Institute and the Russian Employers Federation.

His highness said these protocols provide a clear answer to the question on why this meeting was convened. His highness said these protocols should not be temporary and personal ones, but permanent and comprehensive. [passage omitted]

The second round-table meeting between the Jordanian and Russian delegations is scheduled to convene within six months of this meeting. The suggested venue for the second meeting is Moscow. [end recording]

Vladimir Shumeyko, Russia's first deputy prime minister, and his delegation left Amman today after he met with His Majesty King Husayn and Crown Prince Hasan. He and the crown prince patronized the opening and closing sessions of the first Jordanian-Russian executive meeting.

DFLP Leader Arrives, Stresses Arab Coordination

JN2311104093 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 23 Nov 93 p 1

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—Secretary General of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) Nayif Hawatimah [22 November] Monday stressed the need for Palestinian-Jordanian coordination to foil "partial and unilateral agreements with Israel." In a statement to the Arabic daily Al-Ra'y and the Jordan Times following his arrival, Mr. Hawatimah said coordination with Jordan and the other Arab countries bordering Israel "is essential to protect Palestinian and Arab rights." He said that the Oslo agreement and resulting Sept. 13 agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) had dealt a severe blow to this coordination. Mr. Hawatimah, who is based in Damascus, is a frequent visitor to Jordan.

Resistance Attacks SLA Posts

NC2411131593 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] Kafr Tibnit in the south came under a mortar and tank barrage from al-Dabshah and 'Ali al-Tahir positions at 1100 today. In addition, the highway between Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, al-Nabtiyah al-Fawqa, and Arnun came under intensive sniper fire from Israeli positions in 'Ali al-Tahir and al-Burj hills.

According to security sources, resistance men attacked two South Lebanese Army [SLA] militia positions in south Lebanon, injuring one SLA soldier.

Earlier, resistance men fired large-caliber machine-gun fire and antitank rockets at SLA positions in the security zone. Israeli and SLA artillery retaliated by shelling the periphery of al-Nabatiyah.

Resistance Promises To Continue 'Jihad'

NC2411131793 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] The Islamic Resistance issued a statement at noon today in which it said that the Resistance's sniper unit announced that two Lahdists were killed at the 'Ali al-Tahir post this morning. The Resistance promised the innocent martyrs and residents that they would continue the holy jihad until all occupied territories are liberated from the filth of the occupiers.

Stinger Missiles Reportedly Introduced in South

NC2411103993 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 22 Nov 93 p 7

[Text] Informed sources have said that a party organization [tanzim hizbi] has recently introduced several Stinger missiles into south Lebanon.

Fourteen Palestinian Deportees Ask To Stay Abroad

NC2411093993 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] Fourteen deportees in the Marj al-Zuhur camp have sent a petition to the Israeli Defense Ministry through a lawyer in the occupied territories requesting permission to stay at least two years outside the occupied territories without losing their Palestinian identity to complete their education abroad and for health reasons. Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, spokesman for the deportees, said that if the Israeli Government approves the request we will ask the Lebanese Government to allow these deportees to leave Lebanon for other countries.

Officials Attend Independence Day Military Parade

NC2211124993 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] The Lebanese Army held a military parade today to mark Lebanon's 50th Independence Day. Observers and military attaches unanimously agreed that the parade was the epitome of organization. President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and a number of ministers, Arab and foreign ambassadors, and parliamentary, political, and party figures attended the parade.

After the parade, the president, the chamber of deputies speaker, and the prime minister received congratulations at a reception held at 1130 at the Presidential Palace in B'abda.

Deputy Wakim Calls For Government To Resign

NC2311151093 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Following his meeting with President Ilyas al-Hirawi today, Deputy Najah Wakim said they discussed protecting and supporting the national institutions to play their role in economic development.

On government policy, Wakim said the government does not keep its promises and the results of its social policy have been tragic, as he put it. He noted a need for the government to resign.

Contract Worth 10 Million ECU's Signed With European Bank

NC1911203593 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 19 Nov 93

[Excerpt] An initial contract worth 10 million ECU's was signed at the European Bank headquarters in Brussels yesterday between the European Investment Bank [Bank al-Tathmir] and the Lebanese Council of Development and Reconstruction to rehabilitate and expand Beirut Port. [passage omitted]

'Fears' for Talks Persist Despite U.S. Assurances

PM2311142193 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 21 Nov 93 p 3

[Salwa al-Ustuwani report: "U.S. Assurances Have Not Dispelled Syrian Fear of Bilateral Negotiations Resumption"]

[Excerpt] Damascus—The American assurances have not yet succeeded in eliminating Syrian fears. Damascus still doubts Israel's commitment to the peace process and doubts if Israel would offer anything to enhance the negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Although the U.S. Administration has, in a telephone conversation between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', revealed a new plan to speed up the negotiations, Syria still believes (on the basis of Israeli statements, especially Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' rejection of such a plan) that Israel is confirming its prior rejection of peace and that it will deliberately obstruct the peace process and freeze the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of the peace negotiations.

A Syrian official has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that, despite the fact that it is premature to speak of U.S. ideas to reactivate the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, the reaffirmation of U.S. commitment to the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace as stated in U.S. President Bill Clinton's message to President Hafiz al-Asad is considered of paramount importance.

The Syrian official added that it is impossible to prejudge the essence and nature of the ideas Christopher will bring with him on his forthcoming tour of the region, particularly on his visit to Syria, but it is possible to reaffirm Syria's position regarding any proposals, namely that it is not prepared to continue the negotiations just for the sake of negotiation, and that it believes that any resumption of the peace negotiations must be preceded by a clear and public Israeli commitment to the peace process and its constant principles, especially on the question of a full and comprehensive withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, because continuation of the negotiations without such a clear Israeli commitment would produce no positive results nor would it push the peace process toward its desired objectives, and would give Israel the chance to maneuver and circumvent the basis of the peace process.

The Syrian official stressed that on his coming tour Christopher would find the Israeli negotiator more arrogant and stubborn and less responsive to peace opportunities than before, and that that negotiator would come up with new ideas of loopholes for evading peace and formulas to keep the United States and the world occupied for some time, relying on his calculations for changes in the regional situation. [passage omitted]

King Husayn Seeks To Allay Concern Over Separate Deal

PM2311102693 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Nov 93 p 3

[Salwa al-Ustuwani report: "In His Meeting With President al-Asad in Damascus King Husayn Sought To Reduce Syria's Fears That Jordan May Sign Separate Peace Agreement With Israel"]

[Excerpts] Damascus, Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—King Husayn of Jordan held the first round of talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday.

The Jordanian monarch arrived in the Syrian capital yesterday morning at the head of a Jordanian delegation which included Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali. He was received by President al-Asad and senior Syrian officials. [passage omitted]

Although nothing has been revealed about what was discussed in the Syrian-Jordanian talks, well-informed sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that King Husayn expressed to President al-Asad Jordan's eagerness not to let the Palestinian-Israeli accord affect the unity of the Jordanian domestic position. He also said Jordan will work to contain the adverse complications of the agreement, and will deal positively with developments of the accord in the future so as to give Jordan an area of independence. Jordan also believes that it cannot sever its organic link with the Palestinians and that "it will continue to contain the adverse effects of the accord without affecting Palestinian independence."

King Husayn expressed to President al-Asad Jordan's wish for a comprehensive Arab containment policy and support for Jordan in the face of the hegemonic Israeli balance of power and U.S. bias toward Israel, especially as Articles 3 and 4 of the Palestinian-Israeli accord, which reflect possibilities of absolute Israeli supremacy over the region on the basis of an economic restructuring of the region, require Arab coordination in all spheres.

The well-informed sources stressed that President Hafiz al-Asad and King Husayn discussed the Arab situation in detail and the possibility of reorganizing matters among Arab states on the basis of dealing with the next stages which will govern the region's destiny.

Authoritative Jordanian sources have said that the talks between King Husayn and President al-Asad focused on the development of political events in the Middle East region, especially developments in the peace process and ways of reinforcing political coordination between Jordan and Syria vis-a-vis the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

The sources said that King Husayn is seeking through these negotiations to dispel Syria's fears over the possibility of Jordan signing a separate peace agreement with Israel. Especially as Jordan has repeatedly announced its commitment to coordination with all the Arab parties concerned with the peace negotiations with Israel, and

that Jordan will not sign a peace agreement with Israel before tangible progress has been achieved on the Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian fronts.

The Jordanian sources pointed out that King Husayn will seek to persuade the Syrian president to continue consultations and coordination with Jordan during the next stage of the peace negotiations.

The sources also said that during their talks the Jordanian and Syrian sides will draw up the features of Jordan's and Syria's positions in the talks which U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will hold during his visits to the Jordanian and Syrian capitals in the framework of his tour of a number of Middle Eastern capitals, scheduled to take place early next month. [passage omitted]

'Caution' Toward Iranian Plan for Anti-Accord Front

PM2311091993 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Nov 93 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Iran Trying To Form a Front Against the Gaza-Jericho Agreement"]

[Text] Beirut, AL-HAYAH—Walid Junblatt, Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] leader and refugee affairs minister, will leave Beirut next week for Tehran in response to an official invitation. He will be accompanied by a party delegation.

Junblatt's visit to Tehran coincides with a current visit to Damascus by Lieutenant General Mohsen Reza'i, commander in chief of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, who has been received by President Hafiz al-Asad. Reza'i met with Palestinian leaders representing the 10 Palestinian factions opposed to the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

He also met in Damascus with Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council; Minister Junblatt and PSP deputy leader Durayd Yaghi; a delegation representing Hizballah; and officials in charge of Lebanese Islamic trends and organizations which sympathize with Iran.

A Lebanese party source has told AL-HAYAH that Reza'i asked about the situation in Lebanon, particularly in the south, and about reactions to the Gaza-Jericho agreement. He raised the possibility of forming an Arab-Islamic front against that agreement and expressed his country's willingness to provide all the necessary aid.

The source added that most of the 10 factions and the leaders of Hizballah and other Lebanese organizations "showed enthusiasm for joining such a front, but other parties urged patience." He said that "Damascus sides with the Lebanese parties advocating patience and caution but without dropping its strong opposition to the Gaza-Jericho agreement or its sympathy with those who reject it."

The source attributed Damascus's wait-and-see position to the fact that "although the Syrian leadership still maintains the same position rejecting the agreement and has no objection to the moves of those opposed to the agreement, it has not yet decided to develop its rejection to the point of forming a broad front against it."

He said that "Damascus gave encouraging signals against the Gaza-Jericho agreement but has not closed the door to the current talks aimed at making progress in the peace negotiations, particularly as it awaits the arrival of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in the region and the meetings he will hold with the Syrian leadership. Damascus will take the appropriate stand in the light of what Christopher brings, but that does not mean that it will not benefit from the Iranian move to form an opposition front. It is capable of using it and does not mind alluding to it."

Vice President Views U.S. Stance, Peace Criteria

PM2311112893 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Nov 93 p 3

[Interview with Vice President Dr. Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah by unidentified correspondent in Damascus; date not given]

[Text] [AL-HAYAH] The U.S. Administration has recently reaffirmed its commitment to a just and lasting peace in the region. How do you view these assurances in the light of Washington's agreement to give Israel offensive weapons?

[Mashariqah] The peace process began in accordance with a U.S. initiative. The United States is a sponsor of the process and wants to see it achieve its objectives, as asserted by U.S. officials, who emphasized that the United States will continue to play the role of full partner. That was stated when Secretary of State Christopher came to the region and it was confirmed in telephone contacts between President Clinton and President Hafiz al-Asad and also by U.S. envoys to the region.

They reaffirm commitment to the establishment of peace in the region on the basis of their initiative which guarantees the exchange of land for peace. In his contacts with President al-Asad, President Clinton emphasized that the United States is determined to continue its efforts to ensure the success of the peace process and reaffirmed commitment to work for progress on all tracks in the peace process.

[AL-HAYAH] More than two years after the Madrid conference, the Syrian and Israeli delegations still have not made any process. Why is that, and what is Damascus' deadline for the peace opportunity to bear fruit?

[Mashariqah] Yes, more than two years have passed since the Madrid conference without any progress worth mentioning despite the many sessions of negotiations held. This demonstrates Israel's lack of seriousness and

lack of desire to establish peace and also its tendency to waste time. Furthermore, all positions taken by Israel indicate that it wants to evade peace and violate the Madrid conference terms of reference. As President al-Asad said in his interview with the American television network PBS, "we want peace but do not beg for it," and if others want peace then so do we. We will continue if we find others enthusiastic for the peace process but we would not run after peace if others do not do the same and with the same speed.

[AL-HAYAH] How can progress be achieved on the Syrian-Israeli track? What are Syria's criteria for peace?

[Mashariqah] Progress can be made in the peace talks if Israel adheres to the Madrid rules and complies with international legitimacy and Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338, and if it responds to the essence of the initiative calling for the exchange of land for peace and accepts that peace must be just and comprehensive.

[AL-HAYAH] President Mubarak had, after a meeting with Hafiz al-Asad, expected progress toward peace by the end of this current year. Do you believe that the circumstances are ripe for progress within that time?

[Mashariqah] It is Israel that is responsible for the lack of positive progress in the peace negotiations. It is responsible for the frozen negotiations. It refuses to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories, ignores the legitimate UN resolutions, is trying to kill the land-for-peace initiative, and is pursuing a policy of separate approach and of imposing a fait accompli, partial solutions, and phased settlements on the Arabs. If that Israeli attitude continues, there will be no opportune circumstances for any meaningful progress in the peace process.

[AL-HAYAH] How do you view Yitzhaq Rabin's call on Damascus to follow a policy of open diplomacy and to prepare public opinion for peace? What do you think he hopes to achieve by trying to depart from the Madrid conference formula?

[Mashariqah] Israel's objectives are known. Everybody knows them. It knows that there can be no peace as long as the Arab territories are occupied. It also knows that peace is indivisible and cannot be established in installments. The Washington peace negotiations cannot fulfill their objectives without compliance with international legitimacy and Security Council resolutions, especially Resolutions 242 and 338 on which the U.S. initiative was based calling for the exchange of land for peace.

[AL-HAYAH] How do you view the Gaza-Jericho agreement in relation to its effect on the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and independence? How is the Syrian position interpreted publicly?

[Mashariqah] In the same interview with the television network PBS, President al-Asad pointed out that the Gaza-Jericho agreement was not the best way to establish peace but, despite that, we have decided not to obstruct the agreement they reached or, in other words, not to hamper what they did, and we said that this was the responsibility of the Palestinian people and their institutions.

There has been widespread opposition to the agreement. Numerous Palestinian factions and figures, even within Fatah itself, oppose the agreement and regard it as a surrender of the Palestinian Arab people's rights, especially in connection with Jerusalem, the settlements, geographical jurisdiction, an independent state, and so on. They do not see the agreement as anything more than an unclear, unspecific, and insufficient declaration of principles.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you believe that the agreement has affected the Syrian track? Are there no positive points in the agreement?

[Mashariqah] Coordination among the Arab parties to the Madrid conference was a positive factor agreed by all these parties. We saw the coordination and solidarity among the Arab parties participating in the peace process as a boost for the peace process, driving it towards its objectives, and a factor promoting steady progress. There were continuous coordination meetings among the Arab parties during every session of negotiations, to assess what had been accomplished and form a common concept of all the activities of the Arab delegations. So the Arabs worked together, cooperated, and moved toward a common objective. Suddenly the Gaza-Jericho agreement was announced. It meant that one Arab party was holding secret talks with Israel outside the framework of coordination on which that party had insisted more than anyone else. That is neither the best nor the soundest way for the Palestinians to achieve a just and lasting peace.

[AL-HAYAH] If peace is achieved with Israel in accordance with the Madrid conference rules, what would your position on the Gaza-Jericho agreement then be?

[Mashariqah] I have already said that Syria's position on the agreement, as stated by President al-Asad, is that we did not accept, did not support, and did not oppose the agreement and we will not obstruct the agreement they reached.

Defense Minister Discusses Efforts To Achieve Peace

JN2311211393 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1845 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Excerpts] Under the patronage of His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, commander in chief of the Army and the Armed Forces, and on the occasion of the 23d anniversary of the glorious Corrective Movement, a celebration was held this morning to graduate a new class of Air Force Academy Students—pilots, technicians, and navigators.

Lieutenant General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, attended the celebration on behalf of His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad. [passage omitted]

Lt. Gen. Mustafa Talas, representative of the commander in chief, delivered a speech in which he conveyed the greetings of leader struggler Hafiz al-Asad to the graduates, wishing them success in all the tasks that they will be tasked to carry out in the ranks of our ideological and heroic Army. [passage omitted]

Lt. Gen. Mustafa Talas then spoke about Syria's efforts to attain just and comprehensive peace. He said that Israel continues to be a real obstacle to peace and that the statements of its rulers continue to reflect the arrogance and impudence of its rulers and the aggressive and expansionist inclination of the Israeli leaders with Talmudic dreams.

Talas reaffirmed that, since the Madrid conference, the peace talks have revealed that the Israelis have no intention of achieving peace and that they always work against the course of the peace process to spread their expansionists schemes by seeking to penetrate Arab ranks and conclude separate deals and partial agreements that do not serve peace.

Lt. Gen. Talas added that Syria is very aware of the objectives of the Israeli policy and its expansionist dimensions in the region, and that in light of this awareness, Syria tackles developments and pursues its efforts to establish a just and comprehensive peace that will bring about a total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

Lt. Gen. Talas emphasized that, in all its actions, Syria proceeds from firm political constants and from its pan-Arab obligations to defend the Arab nation and safeguard its dignity, and prevent its honorable militant role and its genuine Arab affiliation from being harmed. This dictates that Syria must abide by international conventions and resolutions and not give up one inch of the occupied Arab territories. [passage omitted]

Press Views Israeli Moves Against Peace, Lebanon

JN2311091393 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0530 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Losing Bet," TISHRIN writes: Virtually the entire international community is now convinced that the achievement of Middle East peace without Syria is an impossibility. This conviction is the result of many experiences. Such a positive development in the international community's posture means three things: a recognition of Syria's growing weight and clout in shaping events; confirmation that the international community has adopted the Syrian idea of a comprehensive peace settlement founded on UN resolutions and the land-for-peace formula; and a setback to Israel's drive to bypass and downgrade Syria's role.

TISHRIN goes on: Significantly, this important twist follows the accord Israel signed with a section of the Palestinian people—an accord wholly authored by Israel and calculated to advance its objective of marginalizing Damascus' role in any settlement and promoting a solution on Israel's terms.

The paper points out that those who had wanted from the Gaza-Jericho accord to weaken Syria have been disenchanted with their plots rebounding on them. If anything, as all the world acknowledges, Syria is now stronger than ever.

Those who have chosen an alliance with Israel over coordination with Syria have reaped failure and forfeited a source of strength for Palestinian struggle inherent in Arab solidarity. Further, an alliance with Syria is a source of strength for the Palestinian cause, and coordination with Damascus during the Washington talks shielded the Palestinians against Israeli pressures and ensured them elbow room to advance the notion of an Arab Palestine. TISHRIN goes on to assert that striking an alliance with Israel deprives and robs the Palestinians of independent decisionmaking, and turns the PLO into an administration to be used by Israel to destroy the foundations of the Palestinian cause.

TISHRIN concludes: Those who wagered on weakening, ignoring, and isolating Damascus have lost their wager. All the world admits that Syria holds the key to peace and that any Middle East settlement that bypasses Damascus stands no chance.

Under the headline "Position Not Advancing Peace," AL-THAWRAH comments: Ever since the launching of the American Middle East peace initiative and the start of the peace process more than two years ago, the thrust of Israeli moves has been to thwart the peace-making effort, divert it from its normal course, and keep it from promoting a comprehensive and fair peace as envisaged in the Madrid formula and legal terms of reference. The evidence that Israel has been following a line against peace leaves no room for doubt that as far as Israel is concerned peace is not an option. Israel's option, the paper emphasizes, is defined by settlement building, creeping annexation of occupied Arab territory, and a massive arms buildup. The outcome of Rabin's recent Washington visit carries additional evidence of Israel's anti-peace bent. Adopting an exceedingly intransigent posture toward the peace process and a rejectionist line toward its obligations, Israel can hardly make a good case for increased arms deliveries, unless the aim is to reward it for its intransigence and stubborness and bless its anti-peace policies with limitless and unwarranted military support. The paper indicates that this conclusion has been borne out by Israel's aggressive behavior toward the Arabs over more than four decades and the

resultant wars of aggression and expansion. AL-THAWRAH asserts that this belligerent Israeli behavior was made possible by American and European weapons offered free of charge. American arms deliveries to Israel certainly do not promote Middle East peace; indeed, they complicate the search for peace. With a bloated military arsenal, Israel will grow even more stubborn, arrogant, and reckless. AL-THAWRAH concludes by asking: Will the U.S. Administrtion reconsider its unwarranted limitless support for Israel before any effort to advance the peace process becomes a mere waste of time?

Under the headline "Lebanon on Its 50th Anniversary," AL-BA'TH writes: Following the al-Ta'if accord, the most important thing sisterly Lebanon has achieved is firm national unity that has denied the country's enemies many opportunities to weaken it and drag it back to the destructive civil war. Lebanon, AL-BA'TH goes on, has, over the past three years, come a long way in rebuilding its constitutional and other bodies on sturdy foundations that will prove impregnable for the country's enemies. Lebanon has triumphed thanks to a national unity underpinning a modern and strong state.

Having made it thus far, Lebanon has ahead of it a even more important mission; and that is to liberate its south from the Israeli occupation. On the independence anniversary, President al- Hirawi and other Lebanese officials emphasized that their number one priority at present is to liberate the south of the country. Al-Hirawi, the paper notes, further stressed that the region will know no peace as long as precious parts of south Lebanon and the al- Biqa's remain occupied.

AL-BA'TH concludes: As our people in Lebanon mark their national day, it must be stated that, as ever, Syria will be supportive of the Lebanese unity and territorial integrity, and whoever thinks that Syria may, under any circumstances, abandon its pan-Arab duties toward Lebanon is woefully wrong.

Ba'th Party Official Receives Iraqi Opposition Members

JN2311174793 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, received members of the Iraqi Pan-Arab Democratic Action Committee this morning.

The committee members include: Staff Major General 'Abd-al-Karim Farhan al-Habib, Dr. 'Abd-al-Muhsin al-Ghuwari, Safa' al-Falaki, 'Abdallah Husayn al-Nasrawi, Nuri al-Bahrani, Jayyar al-Zuhayri, Dr. Badr Louis, Wa'il al-Hilali, Mahdi al-'Ubaydi, and Ahmad al-Musawi.

The committee members reviewed the results of their last meeting and their ideas on the situation and developments in Iraq. They also discussed the tasks the committee is shouldering to bolster the role and the unity of the Iraqi patriotic forces in order to continue their struggle for a democratic system based on political pluralism and a national coalition and to rid the Iraqi people of the tragedies they are suffering as a result of the practices and gambling of the Iraqi regime and the negative results it caused to the Iraqi people and the Arab situation in general.

Comrade al-Ahmar hailed the committee's efforts and the activities it has undertaken to unify Iraqi opposition ranks on the basis of adherence to national and pan-Arab constants.

He emphasized that the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party supports the struggle of Iraqi forces and organizations that strive to rid the Iraqi people of their sufferings, preserve Iraqi territorial integrity, and preserve the unity of its people so that Iraq will assume its pan-Arab role in the Arab struggle.

Afghanistan

Sudan's al-Turabi Arrives in Kabul To Mediate

PM2211141393 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 18 Nov 93 p 1

[Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan report: "Al-Turabi in Kabul; Iranian Warnings to Hekmatyar"]

[Excerpts] Peshawar—While the fighting among Afghan factions continues to escalate in the suburbs of Kabul, Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, leader of the National Islamic Front in Sudan, has arrived in the Afghan capital to mediate between Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar and former Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, who is loyal to Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani. Al-Turabi was expected to meet with Mas'ud yesterday. He will meet with Hekmatyar today.

Observers say that the al-Turabi's visit comes at a time when Tehran has intervened in the crisis, sending signals of warning to Hekmatyar not to aspire to broaden the zone of his influence into Kabul. This coincided with reports of new alliances in the Afghan capital through which Iran is seeking to revive old alliances between those who are loyal to it and Mas'ud.

Afghan figures who met with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati recently have told AL-HAYAH that the latter told them that Iranian intelligence services fear Hekmatyar's intentions "after they lost the hope of persuading him to side with Iran politically."

This fear comes after Tehran realized that Hekmatyar is pursuing a new policy: fighting his rival, Mas'ud, in his last stronghold, Tagab, as a distraction, thus enabling supporters of the Hezb-e Eslami, led by Hekmatyar, to gradually extend their control over Kabul. [passage omitted]

Afghan sources have told AL-HAYAH that Mas'ud has won a new ally, namely the pro-Iran "Wahdah" Party. They believe that the entry into Kabul the day before yesterday by fighters loyal to the party is a warning signal to Hekmatyar not to aspire to broaden the zone of his influence in the capital.

The sources attribute the dispute between Hekmatyar and those loyal to Iran to the prime minister's insistence on rejecting the Wahdah Party's demand that some of its members should be appointed ministers in the government and the Ja'farite sect approved as an official sect in the state. [passage omitted]

India

Diplomatic Ties Reestablished With Pretoria

BK2211090293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] India and South Africa have reestablished diplomatic and consular relations, opening a new chapter in their bilateral relations after a gap of nearly five decades. The historic agreement was signed by the external affairs minister, Mr. Dinesh Singh, and the visiting South African foreign minister, Mr. R.F. Botha, in New Delhi today. This comes as South Africa is about to completely dismantle the apartheid system and transform into a multiracial democracy. New Delhi is likely to open its diplomatic mission in South Africa after the April elections in that country.

Both Mr. Dinesh Singh and Mr. Botha held wide-ranging discussions on diversifying bilateral relations. Mr. Dinesh Singh has expressed satisfaction at the constitutional changes now underway in South Africa. He said Pretoria is following the path New Delhi had expected it to pursue.

Botha Advocates Indian Ocean Grouping

BK2211160693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Excerpts] India and South Africa have reestablished diplomatic ties, opening a new chapter in their bilateral relations after a gap of over four decades. Two historic agreements to this effect were signed in New Delhi today by the external affairs minister, Mr. Dinesh Singh, and the visiting South African foreign minister, Mr. R.F. Botha. [passage omitted]

Speaking to newsmen, Mr. Botha said signing of the agreements has opened the doors to supplement each other's efforts in their economic development and will strengthen cultural cooperation. He welcomed the coming together of the Indian Ocean countries to meet the challenge emerging out of economic groupings such as NAFTA, ASEAN, and APEC [Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation].

Referring to elections in his country, Mr. Botha expressed confidence that they will be held as schedule in April, though the situation still remains volatile. He said that the proposed constitution provides sufficient checks and balances to protect the minority groups and their interests.

Earlier, Mr. Botha attended a luncheon meeting organized by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. Speaking to eminent persons, he sought India's support for his country's proposal for a grouping of the Indian Ocean countries.

Chinese Delegation Meets Telecom Chairman

BK2211161693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] India and China have expressed the need for closer cooperation in the telecom field. A high-level Chinese delegation led by the vice minister for post and telecommunications, Mr. Zhu Gaofeng, called on the Telecom Commission chairman, Mr. M. Vittal, in New Delhi. The delegation was informed that India will take part in the telecom exhibition to be held in Beijing in

October next year. India will also send a trade delegation of telecom industry to China.

*Exit Polls Indicate BJP Wins Except for Himacha

94P50035 New Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 16 Nov 93 p 9

[Excerpt] The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] is likely to emerge victorious in Rajasthan; but the main opposition may lose to the governing Congress party in Himachal Pradesh.

According to exit polls conducted after last week's assembly elections in both northern states, the BJP will win 110 to 120 out of the 199 seats in Rajasthan. Election to one constituency was countermanded following the death of BJP candidate Mahendra Singh.

Congress (I) will get 70 to 75 seats while others will trail with 9 to 10. There was no indication of a wave in favour of any party.

Exit polls for the Delhi state assembly conducted immediately after the elections there on November 6 had suggested a runaway victory for the BJP.

The Rajasthan exit poll was conducted by a team of psephologists.

Ten Assembly constituencies were selected for the exit poll keeping in view various aspects of electoral behaviour in the northwestern state.

Each of these constituencies is seen to have a homogenous character. Results of previous elections were kept in mind while determining the constituencies for the exit poll.

The research carried out by the Centre for Media Studies approached voters in all the 10 constituencies with dummy ballet boxes in which they were asked to deposit dummy votes indicating the party of their choice.

Five or six polling stations were randomly chosen for the exit poll in each constituency. The sample consisted of 2,228- 1,243 men and 985 women.

The Himachal Pradesh exit poll boosted the morale of the Congress (I). It is one of the states where Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress has a fair hope of winning, according to party insiders.

But the state's party leadership is divided and intelligence officials in Shimla said they predicted a hung assembly.

BJP's deputy in the Rajya Sabha, Jagdish Prasad Mathur said government employees in the Northern State might have been against his party because of the erstwhile BJP government's policy of 'No work, no pay'. He also opointed out that apple growers were sore with a glut in the market and lower prices for their commodity. [passage omitted]

Iran

Involvement in Lebanese Hizballah Attack Denied

LD2311125393 Tehran IRNA in English 1224 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 23, IRNA—Iran on Tuesday [23 November] denied involvement in the last week's attack by Lebanese Hizbollah fighters on Antoine Lahd's mercenary forces.

The German weekly DER SPIEGEL in its latest issue claimed that Iranian militarymen were for the first time involved in an operation launched by Hizbollah fighters against Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA).

According to a Foreign Ministry official, the blow dealt by Hizbollah fighters to SLA mercenaries was so heavy that it prompted the Zionist regime to hurriedly show a military and publicity reaction.

DER SPIEGEL wrote that Hizbollah forces overran bases manned by Israeli-backed SLA mercenaries, taking 12 of them hostage.

The Foreign Ministry official said that the aim of the Zionist regime in accusing Iran and Syria of complicity in recent Hizbollah military offensives was to pretend that Hizbollah forces were unable to carry out such accurate and effective military actions.

Foreign news agencies have reported that two strongholds of SLA mercenaries together with six other bases fell to the hands of Hizbollah forces in their lightning attack.

Official Denies Iraqi Refugees 'Compelled' To Leave

LD2311144793 Tehran IRNA in English 1415 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 23, IRNA—Iran on Tuesday [23 November] denied a recent report by the French news agency (AFP) alleging that Tehran has compelled the Iraqi refugees to leave Iran by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (to end March 20).

Director general of Expatriates Affairs Department at the Interior Ministry, Ahmad Hoseyni, said the Iraqi refugees return to their country voluntarily and that Iran has coordinated their return with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office in Tehran.

Hoseyni said the return of the Iraqi refugees is taking place under the UNHCR supervision.

AFP on Saturday in a report from Irbil, northern Iraq, claimed that Iranian officials have asked the Iraqi refugees to leave the country by the end of the year.

Iranian Aircraft Seized, Cargo Confiscated in Afghanistan

PM2411091293 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 21 Nov 93 p4

[Unattributed report: "After Confiscating Arms on Their Way to Afghan Arabs, Dostam Returns to Iran an Aircraft Forced To Land by His Forces"]

[Text] Kabul, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Diplomatic sources in Kabul yesterday confirmed the return of an Iranian aircraft seized by forces of Uzbek leader 'Abdol Rashid Dostam to Iran with its six crew members.

Dostam's MiG fighters had forced the Iranian aircraft, a Hercules C-130 belonging to the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, to land in Mazar-e Sharif last month. Dostam's forces seized the aircraft's cargo which included antitank missiles and machine guns. The Iranian aircraft, according to some reports, was on its way to Konduz which has become a stronghold for "Afghans" who are citizens of more than 10 Arab states.

Uzbek sources, however, have stated that Iran uses Afghanistan as a cover for sending arms to fundamentalist groups led in Sudan by Dr. Hasan al-Turabi. The sources say that Tehran has reached an understanding on this matter with Hezb-e Eslami led by Afghan Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar. The arms coming from Iran arrive at Bahram airbase which is under the control of pro-Hekmatyar forces. The arms going to Sudan are carried by planes which take off from the same base.

At a press conference held in Mazar-e Sharif the day before yesterday, Uzbek leader Dostam warned Iran of "grave consequences" if it continues to send arms to the hardline fundamentalist factions in Afghanistan. This is the first time Dostam, who hitherto has had good relations with Tehran, has accused the Iranian Government of "threatening Afghan unity." The aircraft and its crew were returned after mediation by Turkmenistan President Saparmurad Niyazov. Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani had raised the issue with the Turkmenistan president during his recent visit to Ashgabat. Dostam visited Ashgabat on 27 October and concluded a peace treaty there with Isma'il Agha, ruler of Sirat [names as transliterated], after mediation by President Niyazov.

On another topic, there was chaos in the relief operations in Afghanistan after pro-Hekmatyar forces intercepted a convoy of 16 trucks carrying about 200 tons of flour on its way to Kabul, plundering the contents. World Food Program officials said yesterday that the relief operations were suspended temporarily until the prime minister returns the stolen flour.

Meanwhile, Afghan mojahedin faction leaders have rejected a mediation offer by Dr. al-Turabi.

Al-Turabi met the day before yesterday with Afghan's provisional Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar at his headquarters in Sarabi near the capital Kabul.

Later on Friday al-Turabi, accompanied by some Hekmatyar gunmen, left for Kabul where he was received by provisional President Borhanoddin Rabbani. Their meeting lasted 50 minutes. While in Kabul, he was accompanied by men of the Shiite Unity Party led by 'Ali Mazari who concluded an alliance with Hekmatyar. A spokesman for Rabbani said that he received al-Turabi at the latter's request. The spokesman said: "Mediation is totally out of the question. Al-Turabi came to ask for permission to open an office for his political movement in Kabul. His application was referred to the competent authorities and a decision on it will be taken later."

Sudanese Ambassador in Kabul Muhammad Ibrahim Sulayman confirmed that al-Turabi was in Afghanistan on a personal initiative and that he had no authorization of any kind from the Khartoum government.

Al-Turabi, secretary general of the so-called "Arab and Islamic People's Congress," is also trying to meet with former Defense Minister Mas'ud Shah whose forces are fighting Hekmatyar's supporters around Kabul.

Official Rebuts Report

LD2311125093 Tehran IRNA in English 1220 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 23, IRNA—An Iranian Foreign Ministry official denied a report by the London-based Saudi daily 'AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT' that General Dostam's forces had confiscated the cargo of an Iranian military plane in Afghanistan.

The paper had claimed that an Iranian military plane carrying arms for Afghan groups last month was forced to land in Mazar-e Sharif airport by Dostam Khan's forces and returned to Iran after its cargo had been confiscated.

The official emphasized that the newspaper's report was based on false information. He said after the Islamic government came to power in Afghanistan, Iran had on various occasions offered foodstuff and basic needs to the Muslim nation of that country.

He remarked that it was not the first time ASHARQ-AL-AWSAT was publishing false news on Iran.

UN Report on Human Rights Called 'Baseless'

NC2411090393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Telephone report by correspondent Azmandian from New York on 24 November—recorded]

[Text] The office representing the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva has responded to the UN Human Rights Commission's report on Iran, which was prepared by the commission's special representative. In its reply to the UN Human Rights Commission's special representative, the Islamic Republic of Iran stresses that on the basis of

existing facts and documents, the cases mentioned in the report are completely baseless and undocumented.

Iran's reply was published yesterday as a UN General Assembly document at the UN headquarters. The reply refers to 14 of the cases mentioned in Galindo Pohl's report on the arrest, execution, and dismissal from work of some people, stressing that investigations have not brought to light any documents that confirm these cases.

On the issue of execution as capital punishment, Iran's reply states: Societies are unanimous on the execution of the perpetrators of major crimes, and, according to Islamic shari'ah, issuing and carrying out a death sentence is permitted if the legal process has been completed and the right to have lawyers in court has been ensured for everyone.

In its reply, the Islamic Republic of Iran clarifies that only those elements that carry out armed attacks on the people and on military and law-enforcement forces and resort to terrorist tactics to scare the society are arrested and punished. In these cases, too, the families of the victims can appeal to the Pardons Committee for a second hearing.

Iran's reply emphasizes the need for a decisive approach on drug traffickers and smugglers at the national and international levels, stating: The UN Commission on Narcotics has praised the Islamic Republic's method in the multifaceted fight against narcotics, and we believe that executing major figures involved in drug trafficking is the best way to fight this sinister phenomenon that threatens future generations.

On freedom of the press, Iran's reply explains: Freedom of speech, thought, and the press has been ensured within a legal framework and on the basis of the Press Law. Disrespect for Islamic laws is considered a crime.

Iraq Blamed for Sharafkandi Assassination

LD2211120493 Tehran IRNA in English 1138 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 22, IRNA—Germany's public prosecutor has announced that the Iraqi intelligence organization was behind the assassination of the three ex-members of the dissolved Kordestan Democratic Party (KDP) of Iran in Berlin in September 1992.

The German daily 'SUDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG' in its Friday [19 November] issue wrote that the German prosecutor considers the Iraqi intelligence organization responsible for the assassinations.

Moreover, the daily, published in Munich, wrote on Saturday that the main accused Yusuf Amin had told the Berlin court that the Iranian accused Kazem Darabi was innocent. Darabi had earlier been introduced by him as the mastermind of the plot for assassination of the KDP members, including the KDP Secretary General Sadeq Sharafkandi. He confirmed that he had accused Darabi and the Islamic Republic of Iran under the order of Iraqi Kurds.

The daily's report added that Amin, a Lebanese national, has confessed to the court that the main culprits of the crime had threatened him and his family that they would chop them into pieces.

Prior to Amin's latest confession, the German prosecutor had named Iran as the country responsible for the assassinations. The paper, however, wrote that no report was available on the fate of Amin's parents.

Most German media, prior to this, had extensively reported that Iran was behind the assassination. However, after that only few papers published brief news on Amin's confessions while no radio or television network broadcast the latest development in this connection.

Russian-Canadian Delegation Searches for Plane's Black Box

LD2311191093 Tehran IRNA in English 1858 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Kerman, Nov. 23, IRNA—A joint Russian-Canadian expert delegation returned here Tuesday [23 November] for further search for the black box of the Antonov-124 aircraft which crashed in southern Iran on November 15, killing all the 17 crew and passengers on board.

The cargo plane, which belonged to the Canadian Atlantair company, was en route from Dubayy to Tashkent last week when it crashed into the 2500-meter Jupar mountains in this province.

The body bags of the victims had been transferred to Kerman in the presence of the delegation on Monday in order to be handed over to the representatives of their respective countries after identification.

Janet Yates, a member of the Canadian delegation, said the team would announce its findings after close inspection of the crash site and finding the black box.

President Welcomes Indonesia's Suharto at Airport

LD2311174193 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Excerpts] Mr. Suharto, the president of Indonesia, arrived in Tehran today for a four-day official visit to our country. He was welcomed at the airport by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. [passage omitted]

On arrival in Tehran, Mr. Suharto took part in an interview with the central news unit. He expressed his country's interest in expanding multifaceted relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. He said: It is with utmost pleasure that I convey the warm and friendly message of 185 million Indonesian Muslims to the nation and the government of Islamic Iran.

He added: In my talks with the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, we will discuss international issues and the situation in OPEC. In view of the progress made by both countries in the economy, and in the fields of development and reconstruction, we hope to benefit from each other's experiences.

In reply, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani commented on the visit of his Indonesian counterpart. He said:

[Begin Rafsanjani recording] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. As you have already stated, at present we enjoy bilateral cooperation in many fields; such as in the Nonaligned Movement and the Islamic Conference Organization. Furthermore, we generally have common interests with regard to regional issues and problems. As the most populous Muslim country, Indonesia is a very important country for us. Your experiences in developing your country during the recent years can be very useful for us, while at the same time our experiences can also benefit Indonesia.

Both countries enjoy oil and natural gas resources, and this means that we naturally have related and complementary industries. Our bilateral cooperation is probably more extensive than our cooperations within a regional or an organizational framework.

I would like to thank his excellency the president of Indonesia for accepting my invitation and paying a visit to our country, together with his accompanying delegation. We have already conducted some negotiations in Djakarta. However, as Mr. Suharto had many guests on that occasion, we were not able to conclude many of our discussions, and we hope to be able to do so during the present visit. In particular we would like to discuss the issue of oil prices, which is an urgent issue today for us and also for the other OPEC members. I hope our negotiations can have a significant impact on this important issue.

Problems Facing Palestinian Police Force Noted

NC2411123093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Commentary by the News Commentaries Group]

[Text] With the announcement that Israel had consented to the formation of a 15,000-strong Palestinian police force within the framework of the Gaza-Jericho self-rule agreement, the first group of PLO cadres arrived in the occupied Gaza area yesterday to form the Palestinian police force. This 22-man group, which has completed two-months of training in Egypt, will be under the command of three Palestinian officers who are PLO members. Six hundred other Palestinians are currently being trained in Egypt and an unspecified number in Jordan to undertake this task.

The arrival of this group of so-called Palestinian police in the occupied area of Gaza is symbolic and contrived in nature more than anything else because, in practice, the occupied area is under the control of Israeli soldiers and each day a large number of Palestinian people are either killed or wounded with their bullets.

Despite the passing of two-and-a-half months since the signing of the 'Arafat-Israeli accord in Washington and even though international regulations ensure the right of legitimate defense by people under occupation, Zionist soldiers are authorized to open fire at the Palestinians, even if the soldiers are only suspicious of them.

The factions that oppose the PLO-Israeli accord have said that they will continue their opposition to the Zionist regime and their popular uprising against the Israeli occupiers and that they will not obey orders from the Palestinian police on this issue. The opponents of the accord demand the withdrawal of the occupiers from all the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly Holy Jerusalem, and they feel committed to the liberation of Palestine above all and not to the Palestinian police force, which they believe was formed by Israel to stop the intifadah and to create a confrontation among the Palestinians. The opponents of this accord have stated that they will not clash with the Palestinian police and that their forces are focused on the fight against Israel.

Another problem that the Palestinian police force is facing is the Zionist settlements in the Gaza area, which Israel intends to keep in this area. The fact that these settlers are armed, on one hand, and the Israeli army's intention to ensure their security, on the other, might result in many clashes among the Palestinians, the Zionist army, and the armed individuals living in these settlements. The settlers in this area have stated that they will not obey orders from the Palestinian police force. This will increase the number of cases in which the Palestinian police and the Zionist army will interfere in each other's areas of authority and will make problems inevitable.

At any rate, the arrival of 25 Palestinians to form the Palestinian police force is the only part of the PLO-Israeli accord that has been implemented, hence its contrived aspect. And in this aspect, as well, the propaganda that is being disseminated is greater than the reality.

Islamic Jihad's Shaqaqi on Gaza-Jericho Accord

NC2411110593 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 17 Oct 93 p 12

[First of a two-part "exclusive" interview with Islamic Jihad General Secretary Fathi Shaqaqi; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [ETTELA'AT] It is said that the Gaza-Jericho accord is a deviation from the Madrid conference. Do you accept this view? Would you please do a comparison between what the Palestinians would gain from the Madrid conference and what the outcome of the Gaza-Jericho accord will be?

[Shaqaqi] Let us assume that you are traveling on a highway and you suddenly see a dead end in front of you. You have no other alternative but to find an access road to get out of the impasse. Even if this access road is insignificant, you use it to save yourself. This is how we can compare the Gaza-Jericho accord and the Madrid conference. I want to explain that we, as an Islamic movement, are against such paths. We are against the Madrid conference, too. We are against holding talks with Israel because we consider all the Palestinian territories as belonging to the Palestinians. But today we are comparing the choices that we have in front of us.

The Palestinians went to the Madrid conference to achieve an autonomous government. And now they have chosen a path that will determine in five years time if they can dominate the West Bank. Will they form a confederation with Jordan? Will they form a confederation with Israel? This choice may emerge in five years.

In this transition period, the Palestinian delegation insisted that it be able to establish an autonomous government on the West Bank and Gaza. The Israelis said that they would grant them autonomy, but to the people and not to the territory. This—the Gaza-Jericho plan—was not accepted by the Palestinian delegation because this solution did not contain any principles on a rule over a territory. When in the transition period the possibility of ruling a territory does not exist, there is no doubt that it will not exist in the final form as well.

This accord does not recognize the Palestinians' sovereignty over territory. Even in Gaza, the Palestinian delegation wanted to be saved from the Zionist settlements because how can the Palestinians rule a territory where thousands of Zionists are living in settlements?

The Gaza-Jericho accord says: There is nothing wrong with this. The Zionist settlements can stay and they can participate in the transition stage.

But the issue of Jerusalem, which the Palestinian delegation insisted must be considered, has been completely omitted from the Gaza-Jericho accord. These are the differences between the objectives and motives of the Palestinian delegation in the Washington talks and what 'Arafat and the Israelis agreed on that led to the new accord.

[ETTELA'AT] Some believe that in comparing the Camp David accord and the Gaza-Jericho accord, the latter is more dangerous. What is your opinion?

[Shaqaqi] This is correct. From the very first day I said that the Camp David accord did not include a division between the West Bank and Gaza. But today these two areas have been completely severed in the new accord. Gaza has been placed at 'Arafat's disposal as a training ground so that he can gain some administrative potentials.

The Camp David accord spoke of an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank more clearly that the new accord does.

In the Camp David accord, reference was at least made to stopping the construction of Zionist settlements. But now in the Gaza-Jericho deal no limitations have been set for such settlements. If the Israelis want to add to such settlements, they can do so.

Moreover, there is another difference. When the Camp David accord was signed, international conditions at that time were better than the situation that exists today. At that time it was not only Israel's interpretation of the accord that was taken into consideration. Those Arab countries that had approved the accord had a say, too. Today there are no other sides. All the international sides approve Palestine and most of the Arab sides are working toward American interests.

[ETTELA'AT] In the world today or in previous years, has any autonomous rule like Gaza-Jericho been established anywhere else?

[Shaqaqi] The truth is that you cannot find a case that is similar to that of Palestine, where a population comes from various countries of the world to occupy a territory, to drive the people of that country out of their homes, and to settle there themselves. There is no other similar case in the world. This is a case that is unprecedented in history. The relationship between the Palestinian nation and the Zionist regime is actually a relationship based on contradictions, where each side wants to reject the other because each side believes that it has to have all the rights in Palestine and both sides want to achieve their full rights in Palestine.

Thus, when viewing autonomous rules in the world, we cannot find any example similar to Palestine. For example, there are autonomous regions in Russia today. There is a type of autonomy in Iraqi Kurdistan. We can see other examples of autonomy in Africa. But Palestine is an exception in terms of the ideological, political, and demographic aspects.

[ETTELA'AT] What, in your opinion, will the outcome of this accord be for Israel and for Palestine?

[Shaqaqi] First of all, we do not believe that this accord concerns merely Gaza and Jericho. This pact concerns the entire region. This accord grants Israel the opportunity to become an important center in a "new Middle East," where owning oil and water resources are considered equally important.

Moreover, this accord will have security, political, and economic repercussions. This pact is not only to the detriment of the interests of the Palestinian nation, which will have only 400 square km of land at its disposal and which will leave 98 percent of the Palestinian territory in the hands of the Zionists—and what greater oppression is there for the Palestinian people

who have been fighting for the liberation of their territories for 75 years, it also threatens Jordan's security because there will be only two governments between the Eastern Mediterranean and the Iraqi border. If Israel is to be in this region, then there will be one Zionist regime, which will include Jordan, or there will be a Jordanian Government. Thus, the Jordanians are worried about their future and their fate.

This accord, along with everything that is being said, has destroyed all hopes for Arab unity, as well as Islamic unity. 'Arafat and his associates accepted this accord without the least bit of Arab solidarity and concordance. 'Arafat has actually betrayed his Arab alliance. On one hand, he told the Arabs that he is in alliance with them, and, on the other, he held secret talks with Israel. There is no such thing as Arab security anymore. The Israelis will dominate the area by entering through the window that the Gaza-Jericho accord will open for them. Economic and cultural agreements have been prepared. And a few years after these agreements are implemented, they will also have a presence in Riyadh, Dhahran, and Damascus and will not stay away from Persian Gulf waters, either. Thus, this accord threatens the Palestinian nation and the Arabic and Islamic ummah. It threatens everyone.

[ETTELA'AT] Do you think that this plan has a direct or indirect impact on Iran's policies?

[Shaqaqi] There is no doubt that it will have direct and indirect impacts. Why? Because the West believes that the Palestinian problem and the issue of Israeli security are the most important issues related to its regional interests. Oil and Israeli security are the most important topics on the agenda of each and every U.S. president who wants to deal with Middle East affairs. The United States and the West will fight against any side that threatens Israeli security in the same way that they fight against all those who are not their partners in oil.

Because of its ideological foundation and its geopolitical situation, the Islamic Republic of Iran has a case against Israel. This is an important issue. We should see how much the pressures by the West and the United States will be and also the extent of the Islamic Republic's resistance—to what extent Iran may interfere in the Palestinian issue and be considered as an important side, similar to the way it is regarded on oil issues.

We see how the Islamic Republic does not allow the Westerners to play with the issue of oil as they want to. Iran offers a multidimensional policy in this field, and it also continues its efforts on Palestine. The Islamic Republic's leadership has repeatedly stated that the Palestinian problem is a strategic problem for Iran, and this has been an obvious trait in Iran's policies.

We hope that this policy will be powerfully implemented in the world of realities in the same way that the Islamic Republic is acting in the field of oil and in Persian Gulf security.

[ETTELA'AT] In view of the fact that Israel put forth the plan for handing over the Gaza Strip a year ago, apparently the Palestinian groups did not want to consider the issue and decided to resist it. What is your view?

[Shaqaqi] When this issue was brought up a year ago, Palestinian opposition forces turned their attention to this issue from a propaganda angle. But I must confess that, except for the propaganda, nothing more took place because the Palestinian groups never thought that 'Arafat would be ready to retreat to the extent that he has. We should also take international pressure into account, as well as the carelessness displayed by the region's countries in approving of Israel and 'Arafat. The pressure and approval were stronger than the opposition. For these and other reasons, the opposition groups were unable to achieve a strong and effective unity. For example, there are Palestinian groups that agree with us and oppose Yasir 'Arafat, but they have continued to be members of the PLO under these conditions. Therefore, there are obstacles that have prevented unity among the opposition.

In short, I can say that this issue was not dealt with correctly, but I do not want to say that what happened was kismet and that we did not have any other alternative and that we could not resist it. We could have resisted it, but the forces that supported the accord were and are those forces that are almost ruling the world.

[ETTELA'AT] Please explain to us why Gaza and Jericho were chosen. You have explained the reason for choosing Gaza. But why was Jericho chosen as a place to implement self-rule?

[Shaqaqi] First of all, what they mean by Jericho is an area of about 20 to 25 square km—not a very large area.

Second, there are no Zionist settlements in Jericho, and there are no legacies of the Jewish religion there. On the contrary, the Israelis believe that Jericho is a "cursed city," and it does not have a very good name in the Old Testament. Moreover, Israeli acceptance was a codified answer to 'Arafat's request. [passage omitted]

[ETTELA'AT] Do you think it possible that the Palestinian refugees will return? If they do, where will they settle, especially in view of the fact that Gaza is overpopulated and cannot absorb any more people. Moreover, when it is said that the 1967 refugees can return, does this also include their children?

[Shaqaqi] There are two groups of Palestinian refugees. The first group became refugees in 1948 and the second in 1967. Nothing has been said about the first group and their repatriation. What is being said about the second group and what we can glean from the pact is that only part of the second group, not all of them, will be allowed to return. And those who return will be under the supervision of a committee in which the Israelis will participate. The Israelis say that some Palestinians will be allowed to return for humanitarian reasons. What this

means is that repatriation will not include all the refugees. Naturally, a large number—those who fought or are fighting against Israel—will also be excluded for security reasons. As for those who will return, there is no ban on the return of their children. This too is propounded by Israel as a humanitarian effort. But it is clear that repatriation will not include all the members of the second group of refugees.

[ETTELA'AT] What will the duties of the Palestinian police be? Will they crush the intifadah, or will they deal with law enforcement, fighting crime, dealing with legal matters and so on? Is it possible that the Palestinian police will stand against the Palestinian movement and the Palestinians?

[Shaqaqi] The Israelis believe that 'Arafat also agrees with them on the idea that, apart from civil and penal issues, the duties and responsibilities of this police force will also include fighting against and dispersing the Palestinian mujahidin. Naturally, the Israelis will not assign this duty solely to the Palestinian police. But each time that they feel that this police force is not carrying out its duties, they will interfere themselves. There will be continuous business contacts between the Israeli security forces and the Palestinian police force. [passage omitted]

Commentary Assails Israeli 'State Terrorism'

LD2311203193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] With the official confession of an Israeli official to the assassination of Palestinians outside the occupied Palestine, one more time the world public opinion has been focused on the state terrorism procedure practiced by the Israeli Government.

The director for the strategic studies in the Tel Aviv University, Aharon Yariv, who was previously adviser to Golda Meir, has officially said on the order by the former Israeli premier he had been assigned to assassinate several Palestinian suspects.

Whether resorting to such antihuman acts, which is contrary to human rights, is a fresh issue by the Zionist regime or not, is a question the answer to which can assuredly be found in the long record of terroristic acts by that regime in the past four decades in the occupied lands of Palestine.

The fact that the Israeli official officially admits the practice of terroristic moves, or in other words state terrorism, is an issue which should be contemplated upon, although current evidence at hand speaks of state terrorism of the Israeli regime without their admitting them.

Now, in consideration of the record registering the inhuman performance of the Israeli regime in occupied Palestine and the terroristic acts admitted to by that regime's officials, this question is raised as to why basically, despite flagrant crimes perpetrated by the Israelis, no serious and practical measures have been taken by the international bodies.

It is evident that the violation of human rights and mentioning these countries in the West's blacklist, specially that of America, has been always used as a pressure lever against peoples and governments. In other words, whenever a country adopts a policy contrary to that of the West's interests, the pressure lever labelling that country a terrorist turns into a weapon used against that country, whereas in the face of the Zionist regime crimes which are state oriented, not only no serious reaction is made, rather, with the support lent by America and gratuitous arms and non-arms aid to the Zionist regime, Israel has been given an open hand to perpetrate further crimes. These supports are accompanied by silence and inaction of the international circles.

Impact of Raja'i-Khorasani Letter Assessed

NC1911222893 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 30 Oct 93 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "The Positions on Raja'i-Khorasani's Letter"]

[Text] Various opinions continue to be aired about the letter by Tehran Majles Deputy Raja'i-Khorasani, in which talks and relations with the United States were suggested.

Some of the positions are as follows:

In his 9 October Friday sermon, the acting Tehran Friday imam Musavi-Ardebili responded in detail to this letter. Launching a violent diatribe against it, he described it as an ill-omen and threatened to expose those who propagate the concept of relations with the United States.

The Tehran Majles Deputy 'Askar-Owladi wrote two editorials in RESALAT on 12 and 13 October rejecting all kinds of talks or relations with the United States.

SALAM newspaper continued presenting its former position regarding the letter by Raja'i-Khorasani in the "Hello, SALAM!" column regarding his election to the majority faction in the Islamic Majles. In its 13 October edition in the same column, SALAM stated that the letter on relations with the United States seems to be endorsed by the majority faction in the Majles (the so-called radicals) as there appears to be silence on the issue. It has criticized this attitude of refraining from comment on the above-mentioned letter.

Recommendations:

1. SALAM has repeatedly questioned and criticized the Militant Clergy Association since the writer of the letter was their candidate from the Tehran constituency in the Islamic Majles.

The following two points are worth noting in this regard:

A. SALAM and the Militant Clerics Society—to which SALAM is affiliated—know full well what the stance of the Militant Clergy Association is on talks and relations with the United States. The stance of this Association is the same as the categorical stance of his eminence the imam (may his soul be sanctified) and that of the great leader based on the negation of all kinds of talks, compromise, and relations with the United States which has been frequently endorsed in the various statements issued by the Militant Clergy Association. Even then, it persists in questioning this Association in light of the fact that the writer of the letter had entered the Majles through the services of this Association. In truth, what can we call such a position??

B. It is true that the writer of the letter was the candidate of the Militant Clergy Association in the fourth round of Majles elections and thus entered the Majles. However, the support of one individual at a particular juncture is not tantamount to the endorsement of all his actions and positions.

Just as his eminence the imam—may God be pleased with him—changed his opinion with regard to those individuals who supported him at certain junctures but later on broke in their political stances from him, this did not mean that the imam's support was forthcoming till the Day of Resurrection!

2. It is wrong to criticize the fact that the Militant Clergy Association or the Islamic Majles has not openly spoken on the issue. The letter was not overtly disseminated in society; therefore, any position on the matter cannot be overt.

3. The writer of the letter has also expressed the opinion that this letter was a private one. Some time ago, a report was disseminated in SALAM, following which the JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI carried criticism of the letter without mentioning the writer by name and by presenting an incomplete text of the letter. Following this, a detailed criticism of the Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution Organization was carried in various publications. Recently, the contents of the letter have been criticized by RESALAT and KEYHAN. In any case, the principle of the issue is that a publication divulged a private letter contrary to the wishes of the writer, which is a violation.

4. SALAM's report that the letter was disseminated in the Majles and among the deputies is false; this did not happen.

5. In conclusion, those who are circulating the letter in society and are popularizing the personal viewpoint of an individual on relations with the United States, among others, and are presenting it as the viewpoint of a group or a trend should be asked:

—To whose benefit would such an action be? Is it not true that by propounding this issue publicly in newspapers and in society—regardless of the fact that it is to reject and negate this concept—only the United States and its supporters tend to gain?

—In truth, why do we insist that the personal opinions of one individual who is opposed to the views of his eminence, the imam (may God be pleased with him), the great leader, and the general public and the high-level officials of our system, should be projected as a strong and current mode of thought in our society?

Without a doubt, such actions can only benefit the United States, even if they are committed based on an anti-American stance.

(Reproduced from the bulletin for the month of Mehr [23 September-23 October] of the Militant Clergy Association, Tehran.)

Commentary Discusses Raja'i-Khorasani Letter on U.S. Ties

NC2011172293 Tehran SALAM in Persian 30 Oct 93 p 2

[Part two of a four-part series of unattributed commentaries: "One Letter, Scores of Questions"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] True, Raja'i-Khorasani is a known Militant Clergy Association candidate who entered the Majles with the Association's complete financial and propaganda support. Is the entire group standing behind him and supporting his thesis?

We have no doubt that the answer is in the negative, because we believe that all the prominent members of the Militant Clergy Association, including Nateq-Nuri and the vast group of members and sympathizers of this Association, are not in harmony with this discordant tune of relations with the United States. [passage omitted]

Regardless of everything else, what is the Militant Clergy Association stance on this issue? Does it consider the idea of expediting relations with the United States to be a personal opinion? Doesn't it consider the proponent of such an opinion to be worth reprimanding, especially as he used the group's resources to gain his position in the Majles as the Association's representative, a position he maintains?

How will it answer the public and those enamored of the path of the imam, who are followers of the great leader? Or should we ask: With the revelation that Raja'i-Khorasani wrote the letter, can the silence of the high-level members of the Militant Clergy Association be construed as a sign that the Association consented to what transpired? Should we consider the ambiguous silence to be the lull before the storm and await a responsible reaction from them? [passage omitted]

Correction:

The last paragraph of the first commentary in the series, on 28 October, [published in the 16 November Near East

& South Asia DAILY REPORT on page 77] should have included the attribution: From RESALAT 13 October 1993. [passage omitted]

Asks Majles Speaker To Reaffirm Stance

NC2011174393 Tehran SALAM in Persian 31 Oct 93 p 2

[Part three of a four-part series of unattributed commentaries: "One Letter, Scores of Questions"]

[Excerpts] Referring to his manifesto, Raja'i-Khorasani asked the speaker of the Islamic Majles to place the text of his letter at the disposal of the media. By making such a request, he has construed public opinion to be favorable regarding his political stance and has viewed as positive the popular masses being aware of the text of his letter.

Based on this, perhaps there is no further need for the relevant officials to identify the writer of the letter, especially as the aforementioned individual has claimed he only presented one copy of his letter to the great leader. This certainly helps to clarify things for perceptive and intelligent people.

Regardless of the controversy over the letter's dissemination, we wish to ask Raja'i-Khorasani: What problem will duplicating and disseminating your letter solve? Has he never witnessed the various scenes in which hatred of the United States has been expressed? [passage omitted]

The question is: Are Raja'i-Khorasani's allegations in line with the decisions made by his eminence, the late imam and the great leader, or contrary to them? If they are contrary, then how do they relate to the slogan of "following the imam's line, obedience to the great leader, and support of Hashemi-Rafsanjani?" [passage omitted]

We wish to ask Raja'i-Khorasani: Why do you want to disseminate your letter to the public? Earlier, you congratulated the so-called Democratic President of the United States and supported forging relations between Saudi Arabia and South Africa. Please ponder whether you gained anything from your moves that you are not going further. The current problem doesn't compare with past issues.

The respected Islamic Majles speaker's stance on relations with the United States is clear and we referred to it earlier. But, to eliminate all doubts, we must ask him for the answers to particular questions so that the esteemed readers of SALAM and all those who favor the pride and prestige of Islamic Iran may benefit:

Was it incorrect for Raja'i-Khorasani to write the letter or was Mohammad Qomi, the Varamin deputy, wrong to confront him?

If you did not favor the stance of the letter's writer, wasn't it better for you to have reprimanded the writer of the letter on "relations with the United States" instead of the Varamin deputy?

As a member of the respected Militant Clergy Association, what are your views on someone who is a proponent of compromise with the West, in particular, the criminal United States, in respect of foreign policy? Will he be your candidate again to represent you in the Islamic Majles? Will you again support him?

We don't believe individuals should be removed from political activity simply because they express their opinions; our record shows that this trend is unpopular. But those who have taken Raja'i-Khorasani under their wing and supported him so that he could become the representative of the nation should clarify their opinions on his stance and similar other stances, otherwise wisdom dictates that this sort of thinking will prevail.

In the margin of the issues relating to the letter by Raja'i-Khorasani, we mention that Raja'i-Khorasani directly and the Majles speaker indirectly remarked that it was inappropriate for the Majles to be politicized. This is an important issue. If the Islamic Majles and its free tribune [preceding word in English] are not the place for political discussion, what is? What place, what tribune would it be? To propound political issues, it would be appropriate if the revered Majles speaker were to provide the answers to what has been written in such a friendly and compassionate vein so that the questions being raised and the replies of the Majles speaker can help to enlighten the public.

RESALAT, Clergy Association Criticized

NC2011184693 Tehran SALAM in Persian 2 Nov 93 pp 2-3

[Final part of a four-part series of unattributed commentaries: "One Letter, Scores of Questions"]

[Excerpts] In its 30 October issue, RESALAT carried a commentary entitled: "Stances on Raja'i-Khorasani's Letter." By doing so, RESALAT took another step on the path to presenting the view of the majority faction—the "rightist" faction—on Raja'i-Khorasani's action. [passage omitted]

We will not prolong the discussion on the first part of the RESALAT commentary, because the consistent policy of our affectionate brothers at RESALAT has been to attack SALAM and contradict it, especially now, with the majority faction maintaining a policy of not confronting the writer of the letter on relations with the United States. According to a calculated plan, his critics are the ones to be reprimanded.

But, some of RESALAT's editorial writers, in two issues, rejected the mode of thinking that advocates relations with the United States. This not only pleases us, but is what we expect from the Iranian writers, press, and nation. A source of dread and apprehension for us is: Why, "in the words of the acting Tehran Friday imam," was the ill-omened tune [of relations with the United States] not approached in an appropriate manner? And why was such laxity displayed?

The second part of the commentary is a statement of Militant Clergy Association and RESALAT opinion and its true direction in response to SALAM. It aims to cast aspersions on the sincere questions raised by SALAM. We could discuss this in greater detail: The RESALAT commentary stated that the Militant Clergy Association negates all kinds of talk on relations or compromise with the United States, which has been stressed in frequent statements by the Association. Is this a just reply to the questions from SALAM readers? The past or overall stances of the Association are not the issue here. What is being questioned is the Majles majority faction's not confronting the remarks written by Raja'i-Khorasani.

In our previous commentaries we stressed that we consider most members of the Militant Clergy Association, especially its prominent figures, to seriously oppose compromise with the United States, but this does not detract from our question, which is: Why did the Militant Clergy Association and its known figures maintain a silence or not comment on this trend of thought on relations with the United States? [passage omitted]

What emerges most conspicuously and catches the attention in the RESALAT commentary is that SALAM's appraisal and criticism of the letter on relations with the United States has been condemned more than the writer himself, without RESALAT taking stock of its performance in the past few issues. The writer of the commentary says such a step benefits the United States, even though it is aired from an anti-American stance. How would he appraise the remarks by the acting Tehran Friday Imam Musavi-Ardabili, who described the letter as an ill-omened tune? Would he consider him to be moving on the line of the United States?

Are RESALAT, JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI, and KEYHAN, which have all, in one way or another, commented on and appraised the content of the letter, also working to benefit the United States? It appears that haste in expressing his opinion and the vast distance between slogans and action has brought the writer of the RESALAT commentary to the point where he considers it legitimate to make contradictory utterances. Without even pondering the beginning and end of his remarks, he has disseminated them.

We ask the writer and the staff of RESALAT to pause for a moment and consider whether admitting a mistake is more harmful than insisting on it? Is succumbing to the truth better or is it more worthwhile to criticize others than reflect on your own shortcomings?

We await the clear propounding of the opinions of our dear ones, who we believe do not harbor hopes of relations with the United States, so that it transpires that the letter was written by one individual based on a personal notion and that no pro-Western trend has emerged in the ranks of the rightist faction.

Controversy Over Militant Clerics Society Discussed

Meeting Held

NC2211205793 Tehran SALAM in Persian 25 Oct 93 p 1

[News service report]

[Text] Following the attention paid by the great leader based on the need for the presence and political and press activity of the Militant Clerics Society, a meeting was held last night with the majority of its members participating.

During the session an assessment and exchange of views on domestic and foreign issues was made, including the difficulties regarding the activities and political presence of the Clerics Society. Afterwards certain decisions were made.

Suspension of Political Activity Questioned

NC2211213193 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 6 Nov 93 p 2

[Commentary from the "Domestic Political Desk" feature: "Some Unanswered Questions?!"; punctuation as published]

[Text] In the middle of Shahrivar [23 August-22 September] Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Mehdi Karrubi announced in Hamedan: "During the recent meeting that I had with the great leader, he considered the political and press activities of the Militant Clerics Society [Majma'e Rowhaniyun-e Mobarez] necessary (!)"

It is worth mentioning that Karrubi stated the above in response to a question from a SALAM correspondent. Militant Clerics Society Secretary Karrubi stated: "Following the elections to the fourth term of the Majles, this society decided to remain away from politics for a while.... The resumption of political activity required the approval of the Political Committee of the Militant Clerics Society and the repeal of the decision by this committee to abstain from political activity."

Karrubi explained in this interview that: "In the past few years, the publication of SALAM was initiated by and on approval of the Militant Clerics Society, and Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Kho'iniha assumed responsibility for it and supervised it."

On 25 October, exactly 19 days after the dissemination of the above report, the SALAM newspaper conveyed the news of a meeting by the Militant Clerics Society of Tehran to the public and stated: "Some decisions were adopted at this meeting"!

The following questions remain unanswered for those who are enamored by the imam's line and the leader:

1. In his politico-divine [siyasi elahi] will as well as in all his recommendations during the course of his pride-inspiring life, Imam Khomeyni (may God be pleased with him) enjoined all the strata and the clerics in particular to maintain a political presence in all areas, therefore, on what grounds of the shari'ah did this society decide to suspend its political activity?
2. If the leader of the Revolution deemed the political activity of the society essential, on the basis of what theoretical justification did Karrubi state: The resumption of this requires the approval of the society's Political Committee?! Is it not enough to initiate political activity when the great leader considers such activity essential?!
3. One of the society's members said in his speech on 4 November: "The program of depoliticizing was one of the objectives of economic development.... Ever since the government of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani was established, one of the issues that was propounded was that the trend of depoliticizing should reign over the country." (Footnote: Mohtashami's address to Tahkim-e Vahdat students carried in JAHAN-E ESLAM 3 November).
Regardless of the fact that this is an overt accusation against the government, if we were to assume that what you [Mohtashami] stated was correct, then why did you participate in this trend toward depoliticization [siyasat zoda'i] in the country? Was not the suspension of political activity by the Clerics Society in itself a kind of depoliticizing?
4. When the report of the convocation of the Militant Clerics Society meeting was carried in SALAM newspaper, all were waiting to know at least what decisions had been adopted, however others were not considered fit to be taken into confidence regarding the meeting? Why?
5. There was strong speculation that the Militant Clerics Society would commence its political activity by disseminating a strongly worded statement against the United States on 4 November. Unfortunately, when the leader raised a firm and forceful outcry against the United States, and political groups and cliques consequently announced their stances against that country, thus declaring their presence on the political anti-imperialist scene, the Clerics Society refrained from issuing a statement of even a few lines. Why?!
6. If issuing a statement could not be done, at least Karrubi or Kho'iniha could have adopted a stance against the United States and Washington's criminal policies by presenting an interview or article by a prominent figure of the Society. The noble people of Iran consider even one additional cry against the United States as a boon. What answer do you have for your silence?!
7. On principle, political activity should be commenced in a manner in which one does not lose sight of one's line. Every wholesome political line that harmoniously forges its movement around the axis of the Velayat-e Faqih [rule by the supreme jurisconsult] will thus ensure its success.
You know better yourself that the suspension of political activity does not have any wise or lawful justification, especially when this hiatus implies the suspension of the struggle against the United States!

Karrubi Answers Charges

NC2211222793 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 11 Nov 93 p 2

[Commentary from the "News Desk": "Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Karrubi's Answer to a RESALAT Question"]

[Text] Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Karrubi, the respected secretary of the Militant Clerics Society [Majma'e Rowhaniyun-e Mobarez] of Tehran telephoned our correspondent and answered one of the questions published in our 6 November issue related to his interview in Hamedan:

"In answer to a question on my meeting with the great leader, I did not say that the resumption of activity by the Militant Clerics Society depends on the approval of the Political Committee of the society."

Karrubi elaborated further on this issue, saying: In the interview that took place in Hamedan in the presence of domestic correspondents, I was asked many questions (regarding internal and external issues), including why the society did not engage in political activity. There I said that the resumption of the society's political activity is linked to a decision from the Political Committee. Then I stated that at present the society is involved in theological and cultural activity, and in the seminaries, which was reflected in the interview.

Continuing his explanations, Karrubi stated: Following this question, the correspondents asked other questions regarding important domestic and foreign issues to which I replied. One of the questions asked at the end of this interview pertained to the private meeting that I had recently with the great leader, which had not been reported. In response, I said that his eminence had stated: Your society's presence in politics and the press is essential.

He also provided us with guidance on domestic and foreign issues, after which we convened a session of the Clerics Society. The decisions made then are now being followed up.

Karrubi added: The presentation of the questions and answers all in one place by the mass media gave the impression that I had stated that because of his eminence's exhortations the repeal of the society's decision was necessary for the society to renew its political activity. That is why I have provided this clarification.

[RESALAT footnote] It is worth mentioning that in the article "Some Unanswered Questions" one of the questions was: If the leader of the Revolution deemed the political activity of the society essential, on the basis of what theoretical justification did Karrubi believe that the resumption of the society's political activity required the approval of the Political Committee?

Basijis Plan Urban Defense Maneuvers

NC2411093293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] On the fifth day of Basij [Mobilization] Week, which has been named the day of mobilization, defense, and local resistance, basijis throughout the country will participate in urban maneuvers called "Khandaq" and, by taking up positions in sensitive areas in cities and districts, will display their organizational and mobilization readiness to safeguard urban areas.

Brigadier General Afshar, commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Basij Resistance Forces, made the following statement about the "Khandaq" maneuvers and today's programs for the country's basijis:

[Begin recording] Today is the fifth day of Basij Week. It has been named the day of local mobilization and defense, and 'Ashura battalions throughout the country will carry out local resistance maneuvers throughout the country. These maneuvers will be educational in nature and will boost the organizational abilities of the basijis. They will also include local resistance programs and familiarization and coordination with various programs.

In the east, west, north, and south of Tehran the 27th Division of Hazrat-e Rasul, peace be upon him and his scion, and the 10th Division of Seyyed ol-Shohada will carry out joint local defense maneuvers. In the towns, the local 'Ashura battalions will carry out two phases of maneuvers, consisting of a training phase from morning until noon and a local defense maneuver in the cities during the afternoon.

[Words indistinct] this joint maneuver will be carried out [words indistinct]. During these maneuvers, forces will be deployed at key points, crossroads, and in vital areas in Tehran. We ask that all the dear citizens cooperate in these operations and help these maneuvers to succeed, God willing. [end recording]

SALAM Editor Reportedly To Face Trial

PM2411095693 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Nov 93 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Chief Editor of Major Iranian Newspaper To Stand Trial"]

[Text] Tehran, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Well-informed sources in Tehran said yesterday that the chief editor of a major Iranian daily newspaper will appear before a special military court next week on charges of "weakening national security."

The chief editor is 'Abbas 'Abedi, whose newspaper, SALAM, has over the past two years persisted in criticizing President Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Security authorities arrested 'Abedi while he was walking in a Tehran street with his wife and three children. The whole family was taken to an unknown place, then his wife and the children were released after being told by the authorities not to talk about their experience.

The newspaper SALAM is owned by Mohammad Musavi Kho'iniha, one of the revolutionary mullahs who led the group of students who occupied the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in 1979.

'Abedi was at the head of the attacking group which held 52 U.S. diplomats as hostages for 444 days.

'Abedi's friends say that his arrest came after he had obtained documents on illegal business deals concluded by a number of senior mullahs.

They alleged that one of the documents he wanted to publish proves the the existence of "major excesses" with regard to sending large sums of money to fundamentalist groups in some countries, including Afghanistan, Lebanon, Jordan, Sudan, Egypt, and Algeria.

Meanwhile, a court belonging to the mullahs has interrogated Kho'iniha, but it is not known whether this special court has convicted him. However, sources say that the investigation with Kho'iniha has been completed.

Nepal

Koirala Meets With Visiting Bangladeshi Premier

BK2411064993 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1430 GMT 23 Nov 93

[Text] Bangladesh and Nepal have emphasized the need for closer cooperation among the countries of the region for proper development and management of water resources. This was expressed during the two-hour meeting today at the office of the prime minister of Nepal. The Bangladesh side was led by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who is visiting Nepal, while the Nepalese delegation was led by Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala. During the talks, Zia stressed the need for tripartite cooperation in the management of water resources. She said that equitable distribution is possible if this problem is resolved on a regional basis. The Nepalese prime minister welcomed her opinion in this regard.

During the meeting, both sides held discussions on various bilateral and regional issues. The two sides stressed the need to develop tourism and expand trade between the two countries. The Bangladeshi side invited Nepalese investors to set up joint venture industries in garments, jute, and other sectors. Bangladesh has also offered to export rice to Nepal. The Nepalese side expressed the desire to offer training to Bangladeshi nationals on hotel management and tourism. They also offered to export lentils to Bangladesh.

Zia has called upon the industrialists and businessmen of Nepal to step up bilateral ties between the two countries.

She said this while addressing members of the Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Kathmandu today. Referring to the prospects of economic cooperation between the two countries, the prime minister said that the roads in Bangladesh have developed and facilities exist for transporting Nepalese goods to Bangladesh. She said that construction of a border road is in full swing with a view to establish a direct road to Nepal.

Addressing a civic reception hosted in her honor by the mayor of Kathmandu, Zia proposed establishment of a SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] Mayors Forum. She expressed the hope that this forum will expedite the pace of regional cooperation for the socioeconomic development of the people. Later, the mayor presented the prime minister with the key to the city of Kathmandu. The Nepalese prime minister, Girija Prasad Koirala, was also present.

Zia also addressed a SAARC ministerial conference on women and family health at the international conference center in Kathmandu today. In her concluding speech, the prime minister said that the South Asian countries should give priority in their policies to developing the socioeconomic status of women.

Later, Zia visited the SAARC secretariat in Kathmandu. She is also the chairperson of SAARC. This is her first visit to the secretariat after taking charge of the sevennati . forum. The prime minister also visited the national martyrs mausoleum in Kathmandu and laid floral wreaths there.

Pakistan

Foreign Office: Dialogue With India Upcoming

BK2411144293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] Pakistan and India will resume comprehensive talks on bilateral issues, including all aspects of the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir, on the 1st of January. This was stated in a statement issued by the Foreign Office in Islamabad today. The three-day talks at the foreign secretary level will be held in Islamabad in accordance with Simla agreement. PTV diplomatic correspondent says the new round of talks on Kashmir between Pakistan and India are being held in the background of Pakistan's consistent demand that the dialogue must be substantive and should lead to a solution of the dispute rather than prolonging the agony of the Kashmiri people. Our correspondent says when India offered to resume a dialogue with Pakistan, the new government of Ms. Benazir Bhutto sought clarifications as to whether the talks would cover the status of Jammu and Kashmir and whether the situation in Kashmir would be eased. Our correspondent says Pakistan had categorically refused to resume a dialogue with India unless the question of Kashmir is addressed and the siege of Hazratbal shrine is lifted.

And an APP report from New York says Pakistan's delegate at the United Nations this morning informed the ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] countries on Pakistan-India talks on Kashmir and said the talks must precede an improvement in the human rights situation in Kashmir. He also thanked the fraternal support extended by the ICO countries during the current session of the UN General Assembly on the issue of Kashmir.

Asks India To Stop 'Shifting Blame'

BK2411154893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 24 Nov 93

[Text] Pakistan has once again asked India to forsake its habit of shifting blame for all its failures and shortcomings onto Pakistan. Commenting on a statement made by the Indian Government yesterday, blaming Pakistan's Interservice Intelligence for terrorism and subversive activities in India, a Foreign Office spokesman called on the Indian Government to refrain from hostile propaganda against Pakistan. The spokesman recalled that India and Pakistan have agreed to hold foreign secretary-level talks on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute and other bilateral issues in the first week of January. He said that the contemptuous statements, like the one made by the Indian home minister yesterday, against Pakistan and its institutions and false and baseless commentaries under government's patronage can only have a negative impact on the prospects of the resumption of talks between the two countries.

Paper: U.S. Seeking Independent, 'Subordinate' Kashmir

BK1911133993 Rawalpindi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 17 Nov 93 p 10

[Editorial: "The Kashmir Issue—U.S. Plan Should Be Foiled"]

[Text] According to a news analysis published in the GULF NEWS, the United States is pursuing a plan to make Kashmir a subordinate regime. It wants to create an independent state in the whole of Kashmir, comprising the Indian-occupied Kashmir, Azad Kashmir, Gilgit, Baltistan, and Aksai Chin regions. The recent statements of Robin Raphel, the U.S. assistant secretary of state, in which she referred to the third option for a solution to the Kashmir issue, were in line with this plan. The United States again started describing Kashmir as a disputed territory, prompting strong protest from India. Simultaneously, however, it has also made it clear to India that by the disputed territory the United States means all regions of Kashmir that were part of the State of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947. Senior U.S. official John Malott had challenged the accession of Gilgit, Baltistan, and Hunza to Pakistan as well.

It is only ironic that while India is expressing concern over the U.S. statements, Pakistan on the other hand is completely silent. Moreover, caretaker Prime Minister Moin Qureshi had also mentioned the third option.

Nawaz Sharif had also mentioned the third option at least twice during his prime ministership. The acclaimed freedom fighter and prime minister of Azad Kashmir, Sardar Abdul Qayyun Khan, in his statements has also expressed the view that he sees nothing wrong in considering the third option. Despite this, government leaders of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir have been forced to withdraw their statements due to the pressure of the public opinion. But none of them has so far been able to emphatically declare that he rejects the third option.

The fact is that religiously, culturally, historically, and geographically Kashmir is a part of Pakistan, and according to the agenda of the partition and independence of India, Kashmir should have been the part of Pakistan by virtue of being the adjacent Muslim-majority territory. When India occupied a part of Kashmir by force and a war broke out between Pakistan and India in 1948, it was India that approached the United Nations with a cease-fire proposal. In response, the world body ruled that a plebiscite should be held in Jammu and Kashmir to enable the residents of the state to decide whether they wanted to join Pakistan or India. The resolution did not allow the Kashmiris unlimited sovereign rights, because it was not practically possible, nor was it mentioned in the agenda of the partition of the subcontinent. India then accepted those resolutions. However, with the passage of time, it deployed more troops in Kashmir. Today, more than 500,000 Indian troops are engaged in atrocities in Kashmir while the Indian Government is claiming that Kashmir is an integral part of India. India discarded the UN resolutions as the world community was not serious in exerting pressure on India to implement them.

Now, the United States has openly started talking about the formation of an independent state comprising all territories of Kashmir. The main motive of the United States is to seek a base around China from which it can hatch conspiracies against it. The United States fulfilled its designs in the Middle East through Israel. Now it visualizes another opportunity to create another Israel in the Indian subcontinent through the "independent, sovereign Kashmir."

The U.S. plan, on the one hand, negates the established formula on the partition of India. On the other, it aims at depriving Pakistan of ground links with its sincere and friendly neighbor China by including Aksai Chin, Gilgit, Baltistan and Hunza regions into the "greater" Kashmir. The United States is now world's only superpower, and its new world order aims at subjugating the whole world. Pakistan needs to remain alert to U.S. designs. An independent and sovereign Kashmir will not only prove to be a subordinate state of the United States and the hub of CIA conspiracies, it may also trigger a new process of overthrow and upheaval in the Indian subcontinent. Pakistan has already been bifurcated, and it cannot afford any more divisions. What is needed is for Pakistan to vehemently oppose this plan and convince the countries of the Islamic bloc and other independent nations of Pakistan's just and righteous stand and emphasize on seeking a solution to the Kashmir issue through a plebiscite. The United States on its part should also abandon the idea of becoming a colonial and despotic power in this era of progressive and enlightened thinking of 21st century.

President Leghari Stresses Stability, Consensus

BK2111150993 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 21 Nov 93

[Text] The president, Mr. Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, has said that political stability in the country is a must for rapid economic development of Pakistan and well-being and prosperity of its people. He was addressing the senators, MNA's, and MPA's [members of National Assembly and members of provincial assembly] belonging to the Punjab Province at the Governor House today. Speaker of the National Assembly Syef Yusuf Raza Gilani, Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Alim, veteran politician Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, ex- caretaker Prime Minister Mir Balkh Sher Mazari, the governor and chief minister of Punjab, were among those who attended the meeting.

Expressing the hope of government-opposition cooperation on vital national issues, the president said it was his earnest desire that issues are settled through consensus and mutual consultation. The president categorically said that he would strictly adhere to the Constitution and make efforts to strengthen democratic traditions in the country. He reaffirmed that he would devotedly strive for the rule of law, justice, and fair play. He said it was high time all political parties joined hands and worked sincerely for the progress of the country.

Criticizing unilateral amendments made during the dictatorial rule, the president said these amendments were made without any consensus. The environment, evolved after the recent general elections and presidential elections, was such that the amendment in the Constitution has become possible. He expressed the confidence that all political parties will have consensus in this regard.

In Lahore, the president, Mr. Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, today paid homage to poet-philosopher Allama Iqbal. The president laid a floral wreath at the mazar [tomb] and offered fateha [prayers]. The acting governor, retired Lieutenat General Mohammad Iqbal, and the chief minister, Mr. Manzur Ahmad Wattoo, also accompanied the president.

Sharif Urges Maintaining Nuclear, Kashmir Policies

BK1911120193 Islamabad THE NATION in English 19 Nov 93 p 12

[Report by Naeem Qamar]

[Text] Karachi—President Pakistan Muslim League (N) Mian Nawaz Sharif has urged the PPP government not

to compromise on nuclear programme and Kashmir question under any expediency.

He was talking to the journalists at Pakistan Muslim League House here on Thursday soon after his arrival from Lahore.

Nawaz Sharif asked the PPP government to continue the foreign and economic policies pursued during his government tenure and should not compromise on the vital issues like nuclear programme and Kashmir.

He said the Opposition had extended support to the government in the Parliament on the promise that it will not concede on principles. However, if the government compromises on any vital issue and continues persecution of the leaders and workers of the PML especially in Sindh province. The PML may not extend its support and would be forced to protest.

He said the government wants to bring an amendment in the Anti-Terrorists Special Courts Act only to protect the workers of PPP dacoits [roving gangs of criminals] and "patharedars" [petty landlords].

He said: Today the government is weak and the Opposition is strong one, however, the Opposition will play its due positive role and not go for long march.

Bhutto Announces Action To Strengthen Air Force

BK2211123193 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 22 Nov 93 p 1

[By Salim Bekhari]

[Text] Rawalpindi: The Prime Minister, Ms Benazir Bhutto, Sunday [21 November] said her government would do its utmost within its limited resources to see the Pakistan Air Force in highest state of readiness to meet any eventually.

She made these remarks during her first visit to the Air Defence Headquarters of the Pakistan Air Force at Chaklala after assuming the office of the Prime Minister where she held a one-to-one meeting with the Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal, Farooq Feroze Khan. She remained with the Air Chief for half an hour exclusively while Defence Minister, Federal secretaries kept waiting in the conference room.

After this she attended a marathon briefing session. The briefing was conducted by the Vice Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Shafiq Haider, who apprised the Premier of strategy formulated by the PAF for procurement of urgently needed equipment from other sources.

The Prime Minister is believed to have conveyed to the top brass of the PAF that self-preparation was the best defence.

She also said that her government attached great importance to the PAF whereas the internal security and national defence were concerned.

The issue of suspended supply of F-16 aircraft also figured prominently during the briefing session and the Prime Minister was updated on evaluation of various other aircraft, including French Mirage-2000, Russian MIG-29 and SU-27 and British Jaguar aircraft.

It was emphasised that if the supply of remaining F-16s was not possible in the near future, other options should be explored to strengthen the country's air defence.

The Prime Minister gave categoric assurance at this stage that the federal government would utilise all its resources to meet the demand of the Pakistan Air Force for this purpose.

The controversial Pressler Amendment that did led to suspension of the supply of F-16s also came under discussion and it was resolved that the government should do everything to negotiate the issue with the United States leadership since Pakistan's nuclear programme was for peaceful purposes.

PPI adds: Responding to a question, sources said that Prime Minister Ms Benazir Bhutto also exchanged views with the PAF officials on the operational preparedness of the PAF with particular reference to its combat capabilities.

Replying to another question, sources said the Prime Minister was also briefed about the achievements of the PAF in the recently held Highmark'93 exercises.

The Prime Minister was assured during the briefing that the Pakistan Air Force is not ignorant of its sacred duties of defending country's aerial frontiers and will give a crushing blow to anyone trying to indulge in adventurism against Pakistan.

Naval Chief Discusses Cooperation With Saudi Admiral

BK2211150293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 22 Nov 93

[Text] The deputy commander of Royal Saudi Naval Forces, Rear Admiral Prince Fahd Bin Abdallah Bin Muhammad Afsal, visited the naval headquarters in IslamabaH. The Saudi rear admiral met the chief of naval staff, Admiral Sayeed M. Khan, and discussed matters relating to promoting cooperation between the naval forces of the two countries. Later, Prince Fahd Bin Abdallah attended a briefing on organization of Pakistan Navy.